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# COMMODORE USER

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## VIRGIN CHALLENGER II GAME PREVIEW • SUPER PRIZES



**REVIEWED: GHOSTS & GOBLINS • GREEN BERET**

**C16: FRANK BRUNO & JET SET WILLY**

**PLAY TO WIN: V • SPINDIZZY • C16 COMMANDO**

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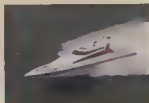
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## REGULARS



# Letters

## Real bugs

● I thought I'd take a few minutes off from *Alternate Reality* to drop you a line. Firstly, I think the game is the best role player game as yet seen on the UK market. Unfortunately, it's full of bugs. They're so bad on one point that I had to reset 33 times in a sixteen hour session of frustration.

U.S. Gold said it was all due to it being made for the 64 and not the 128 but I've proved them wrong: it crashes on either machine. I for one would like them to give me a good copy because I actually like the game. The bugs are as follows — maybe other readers will back me up.

The sun turns into a big flashing square. The description line below your experience line often gets a white cursor on it which blanks out some of the description words. A white square forms beside the picture whilst playing. When you have filled up with potions i.e. protection + a further quaff will crash the game. Also when you buy six or more rounds in a tavern the lower half of the screen crashes and a jumble of symbols appear for a split second before resorting back to normal.

Malcolm Hamden,  
Stamford, Lincs.  
P.S. If anyone reading this is playing *Starblaze 3* the PBM game, visit me at Lere for some interesting weapons or support items for *Coffacts/Colonies*. Captain Pasimov.

## Strange request

● Help! I bought a Commodore Plus/4 for Christmas, and returned the Guarantee Card, and they just sent me as a free gift a software cartridge called *Strange Odyssey* and once I get out of the Spaceship I

come to a dead end. So as I read through the very basic instructions, I see there is a hint book to help decipher messages and clues, so I got in touch with Commodore at Corby, they gave me a phone number, but the firm is now out of business. So Corby suggested I contact a magazine to see if someone could help me. So please can you tell me where I can obtain a hint book. May I also say thank you for a great mag and keep up the good work.

J.A. Brown,  
Taunton, Somerset.  
Can anyone help out there?

## Super Bowlup

● I recently bought the American Football game *Super Bowl* by Ocean. It's a great game, much easier to play than the other American Football games on the market which I have. *Super Bowl* has good graphics and sound and must — overall a good game for the money.

But I have discovered a couple of problems. You can only score points up to 99 for your highest score, and when you play for the team going up the screen a field goal or extra point attempt fails because the ball never goes through the uprights. It always fails short.

If you score more than 99 then your score goes back to zero. I found this out when I played against the computer. In the third quarter I was Bears 99 and the computer was Patriots with 21 points. I scored three more touchdowns and three more extra points, the Patriots scored one more touch down and one more extra point which should have made the final score Bears 119, Patriots 28 but the total I got was 19:28!

Did the programmer make a

mistake or didn't he expect any one to score more than 99 plus against the computer? Is there anything we can put in at the start of a game before we load the main program to make the game total the points over 99 plus?

This is the way I played the game to score more than 99 plus points. I played the same offence right the way through the game. first menu RUSH PLAY second menu 1 FORMATION third menu SET RECEIVER the last player of the (1 FORMATION). third menu MENU fourth menu PLAY GAME

I played the same defence 4-2-5  
21-marked-22 53-marked-69  
23-marked-25 63-marked-64  
35-marked-81 95-marked-10  
91-marked-71 95-marked-71

I used no power on the kick off then moved my players to the ball to get a 1st down 12 yards.

M.S. Jupp,  
Hove, East Sussex

## Elite excuse

● Thank you for your excellent review of our *Silver Game Thrust* in the May issue of *Commodore User*. I am writing however concerning Fred Reid's review of *Empire* which appeared in the same issue.

I would like to know who, at Firebird, told him that *Empire* was "a cure for bored Elitists"! *Empire* is not a cure for bored Elitists. We have gone to great lengths with reviewers, and with the style of the advertising, to stress that *Empire* is not supposed to be *Elite*!!

Anyone who plays *Empire* will find that the game-play, graphics,

objectives, and style of the game place it quite apart from anything else on the market. Given the detailed nature of Mr Reid's review, and the many good points which he has to make about the game, I wonder what he would have concluded had the game been from a different publisher, or even (Heaven forbid!) had "Elite" never seen the light of day.

Sorry about the gripe. The mag's usually brilliant.  
Phil Frost,  
Marketing Manager, Firebird Software.  
Fred's review would have been the same whoever published it, and we stick by his comments Phil.

## Turbo 16

● I read your magazine every month. But in the May issue of *CU* I noticed that in your Letters pages some readers asked if there was a turbo-load program for the C16.

Well, there is one company called Supersoft who sell a turbo load program at £6.95 and the phone number is as follows: 01-861 1166.

I hope you are now pleased that your problem is solved.

Justin Hutchings,  
Leamington Spa.

## Poster plea

● This humble letter is for Eugene Lacey, Bohdan Bucak, Mike (Hot Shots), Porsche fanatic or is it No. 64 Route/master bus! Patterson.

Anyway, your 'mag' is absolutely 'BRILL' and now it's had a facelift, 'FANTASTIC'!! Shame it has to go to a pound, but let's face it it'll be worth every penny of it. Does this glamorous new look and extra freebies have anything to do with my previous letter in Feb? (what letter? — Ed). Anyway keep up the good work and show those twerps at Zzap! (now, now — Ed) what *Commodore User* is made of. How about chucking in a free poster from time to time? Every

Letters, Commodore User, Priory Court,  
30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

other mag has one sometimes. Get a guy called Christopher Foss to draw some up for you. He is a fantastic sci-fi artist. He designed the spaceship *Nasromo* from the film *ALIEN*.  
Richard Gibbons,  
Stranmore, Wiltshire.  
Your suggestions are duly noted.

## Jim fan

Who is Uncle Jim?  
The man is a genius.  
At the end of this  
century we will number him among  
the world's most gifted men  
Einstein, Edison, Benz, Rutherford  
Uncle Jim

How can I join his Commodore  
Club in order to be privy to the  
great man's innermost ideas? The  
customised doorbell was nice, but  
SQUID was inspired, Commodore  
owners have been waiting for years  
for something as useless as this to  
attach to their micros.

I have myself been working on a  
music system for the 64 for the last  
eighteen months. It involves  
interfacing a mouth organ and a  
Wurlitzer jukebox via the joystick  
ports but I've run into one or two  
problems with ROM though. Will  
SQUID override this or am I an  
idiot! Please don't print my name  
because I don't want everyone to  
know I'm a berk.

Julian Tooley,  
Liverpool.  
Name and address  
withheld by  
request.

## Puny game

Myself, my cousin and lots of  
my friends who all own  
Commodore 16 computers have all  
bought the Mr Punyverse computer  
game by Mastertronic. We all find  
on playing it that when you get  
about 7 vitamin pills the game just  
crashes. So there is no way at all  
that you can ever win the game  
because you have got to get 25 pills  
to win. This takes all the enjoyment  
out of playing it. Can you please  
find out if this is supposed to happen  
or are they lousy or pirated games  
Thankyou,  
Charles Cornaby,  
Hants.  
Mastertronic say there was an  
early version which had a bug.  
Somehow it sounds as if you've  
got hold of one. Change it or  
frame it!

## Arcade Asteroids

My story is of sad and old  
About a game you will be told  
A game that is devoid of droids  
The vintage game of Asteroids

For years I've searched high and low  
To find the game that I love so  
Making do with Exploding Fast  
Can cause a boy to go round the  
twist

I wish to inquire, if not plea  
For the name of a software  
company  
That will duly provide, for a lee  
That magnificent piece of computer  
history  
David John,  
Port Talbot

## Ins and Outs

I disagree with the article A  
Fan Writes (June) the GForce and  
Mike Pattenden are 'brill'!! So if he  
doesn't like CU he can order Zzap  
64 so he can have a laugh

I also defend U.S. Gold, most of  
their games are worth £9.95, i.e.  
Winter Games, Summer Games, and  
their new game World Cup Carnival,  
looks to be worth £9.95. And their  
new budget games are well worth 3  
quid so stay off U.S. Gold's back.

Here are the C96's and Plus4's in's  
and out's  
Mr. Tony Kelly Mastertronic, Good  
Games, CBM User, World Cup  
Carnival, Gremlin Graphics Out.  
Brian Howarth, Gremlins, Invader  
Games, CBM Magazines that snub  
C16's and Plus4's. Indoor Soccer  
Software Houses that don't convert  
games, CBM Horizons and Zzap 64  
Niall McDermott,  
Manchester

## More pocket money

I read and enjoy your mag but  
in issue 5 I read the letter  
section and most of the letters  
criticize the mag. Can't anyone  
praise it? Especially I read one  
where all the writer did was moan  
and criticize it. Why do they buy it?

The only thing I'd like to criticize  
is that the competitions are too  
hard for us younger readers to  
answer. So why don't you make  
different age sections? The mag is  
also quite expensive when  
companies you show expect you also  
to buy a computer game for around

£10 when I only get £1.50 a week  
and I'm expected to buy your mag  
(which I don't mind) and buy a £10  
game

Mastertronic games are only  
£1.99 which I don't have so much  
trouble saving to buy but companies  
like U.S. Gold are greedy.

Dorrell Pratt,  
Holyhead, Gwynedd.

## Must you go?

I have been an avid reader of  
C.U. since buying my first issue in  
March '84. I have since bought  
every issue and until a few months  
ago have thought it to be the best  
available for Commodore users. I  
would like to say that I agree with  
most of what D. Proctor says in his  
letter of June '86.

I could once look forward to my  
C.U. being delivered, but it's gone  
downhill since introducing the  
following:

1. Hot Shots (Shoot Mike  
Pattenden)
2. Uncle Jim's Club (Why not make  
him a grandad and retire him)
3. GForce (Send them to Libya.  
They can bore Gadafi! Instead of  
me.

Why have you started reviewing  
games in more depth? They take  
too many pages. I would like to see  
more on the programming side i.e.  
Languages such as Pascal, using  
utilities to their best or as an assembly  
language course.

Don't forget that we the readers  
pay your wages. I've seen a lot  
more criticism of C.U. in your  
letters than previously and there are  
other Commodore magazines who  
seem to have got their act  
together, namely Your Commodore.  
Now that you have changed the  
front cover try a facelift on the  
interior, it's in desperate need. I'll  
be buying C.U. for the next couple  
of months but if there's no change  
then I change. (To Y.C.)

Terry Waterhouse,  
Rassendale, Lancs.  
See you, Tel. You won't be  
wearing the T-shirt then.

## Swift retort

After reading the letters  
from Daniel Proctor, (June 1986) I  
felt I must write in defence of your  
excellent mag

Firstly he says "who wants to  
know what Kevin Toms was doing  
in another mag?" Well, (from what  
Mike "mine of information"  
Pattenden tells us) it was a nude  
centrefold and Daniel wanted  
posters of programmers (some  
perverted connection perhaps?)

Then he goes on (and on) to  
criticize "Kevin" McMahon (I could  
have sworn his name was Ken) and  
the way he "rips every programmer  
efforts to shreds". Ken gives praise  
where it is due, e.g. *Pa 5 Trading Co*  
and *Aspington*, but when a piece of  
software as bad as *Death Wake*  
comes up it deserves to be ripped to  
shreds. As for thousands of  
readers shouting him down, they  
were probably complaining that he  
didn't burn every copy!

As for criticizing Mike Pattenden's  
*Hot Shots* column (which is, along  
with his witty reviews, the funniest  
bit in the mag!) if we were all  
miserable, jumped-up little nerds like  
Daniel, what a pity old life we'd  
live.

Lastly, to deal with the most  
incredibly stupid complaint I have  
ever heard in my life. The reason  
most, if not all, CU readers buy the  
magazine is for the games reviews  
so his idea of reducing the number  
of them is hardly going to be  
popular is it?

Keep up the good work  
especially the C16 bits, and  
congrats. on the new image.  
P.S. I thought of a brilliant idea for  
a *Sigae Squee Crudnik* game. You  
hate them up against a wall and blast  
hell out of them.  
Dorren Rogers,  
Haydon, Merseyside.  
Thank you for your well  
observed remarks Darren, Mike  
says he'll send you the tenner  
by return post.

Our letters bag is bulging with your comments,  
criticisms, queries and praise currently so we're  
expanding our letters page. Every letter printed gets a  
coveted Commodore User T-shirt, but we've added  
an extra incentive — the chance of winning a chart-  
topping game for the star letter of the month. So get  
your pen and paper out and write in to:

Letters, Commodore User, Priory Court,  
30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

# BUZZ

## Commodore struggling

Commodore International has announced further losses for the last quarter amounting to £25 million and a further seventy redundancies at its Corby plant.

This comes on top of the reports earlier this year of its financial problems with the banks.

To make matters worse it is now becoming clear that the Amiga is unlikely to prove the popular successor to the 64 that Commodore hoped it would be, especially since it has been confirmed it will carry a hefty £1,700 price tag.

Its price puts it into the fiercely competitive small business micro market dominated by IBM and the dozens of clones based on it.

To give the Amiga a fighting

chance Commodore have announced an add-on called Sidecar which will enable the Amiga to run standard PC software like Lotus 1-2-3 and dBase, though the announcement by Amstrad to put an IBM clone into the market for £500 won't do that package any favours.

Despite this, Commodore's U.K. boss Chris Kaday remains bullish about the Amiga. "We received tremendous response to the machine after launch."

He rejects the criticism that the machine has no proper slot in the market. "It will be bought by businesses, by companies who are particularly interested in graphics and by some home enthusiasts," he insisted.

## Press Baron

You don't have to be an Eddie Shah or a megawealthy Maxwell or Murdoch to run your own newspaper. All you really need is a Commodore 64, a printer and a snappy new piece of software called *The Newsroom*.

*The Newsroom* lets you create the pages of a newspaper, magazine, fanzine or whatever you like, and print it out page by page. You can create the banner for your paper, write the text, lay it out in columns on the page (there's a choice of three page sizes) and include illustrations.

The system comprises two disks, system disk and Clip Art disk, the latter holding hundreds of graphic illustrations which can

be lifted out and incorporated into your page. The system is completely joystick and icon driven and looks like being simple to use.

There's also a 'wire service' facility for people with modems to transfer material to other computers — a 64, Apple II and even an IBM PC.

*The Newsroom* costs £39.95 (disk only) and is being distributed in the U.K. by Anrolasoft. It should be available by the beginning of August. Our stringer tells us Lou Grant of the L.A. *Trib* is already trying to get a copy. Look out next month for our exclusive review — tough luck Lou.



Nevertheless the Guardian reported recently that only 50,000 Amigas have been sold worldwide. With a \$40 million launch budget and enormous development costs that kind of turnover is unlikely to get them close to break-even.

Problems with the Amiga are unlikely to effect the owners of other Commodore computers.

Despite the company's financial difficulties they have just announced plans to improve their

after-sales service for owners of the home machines.

Third-party computer repair outfit Verran Micro Maintenance Ltd of Camberley will handle all servicing of machines still under warranty, from July 1st.

In a press announcement Commodore stated that they hoped Verran would re-employ some of the staff just laid off to help set up the new servicing facility.

## FACELIFT FOR 64

Commodore have announced a facelift for the ageing 64 in an attempt to boost its flagging position in the home computer market.

The revamp will only affect the machine's appearance though. It is to be reborn in a shell similar, if not identical to the sleek, cream-coloured 128. An American software house is rumoured to have developed a fancy, icon-driven commands system for the 64, similar to the Gem system used by more expensive machines.

The 64 will not offer any extra memory or improvement in terms of sound and graphics, so it will at least, be 100% compatible with the old machine.

It is also expected that Commodore will offer the option of a 3½ inch disk drive — the increasingly popular format used

by the Amstrad and Commodore's own Amiga. This would replace the outdated and sluggish 1541 and 1570 disk drive.

The key question is that of price. With the Amstrad-Spectrum now selling at £130 the pressure is on Commodore to come up with an attractive package at a good price if it is to maintain its position in the market.

The most likely option is the standard marketing ploy of bundling the machine with a disk drive and cheap printer for around £400, though Commodore are being very tight-lipped about this.

The new-look 64 is scheduled for imminent launch in Germany, on should reach the U.K. later in the year.

## FINAL REPLAY

The original *Final Cartridge* for the Commodore 64 should have been called the semi-final cartridge because it's just been enhanced and improved.

Major new features tammed in are the 'freezer' function which allows you to make personal back-up tapes of your tapes or disks. Pirate tape copies beware — the cartridge must be in place when you load your back-ups.

There's also a sprite killer that cancels sprite collision detection (just like *Come Killer*) for those of you who'd rather cheat than

break your joystick. And for real boffins, there's an improved machine-code monitor.

Add that to an impressive list of menu-driven functions that include toolkit and DOS commands, a Centronics interface, screen dump facility, preprogrammed function keys, disk/tape turbos and 24K of extra RAM and you've got what amounts to a real bargain for £45 — that's a fiver cheaper than the original version. More details from H and P Computers on 0376 511471.

## THE FINAL CARTRIDGE

THE FIRST OUTSIDE OPERATING SYSTEM FOR THE COM 64



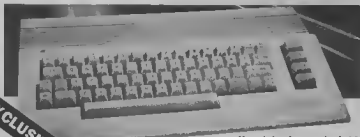
## Mastertronic goes 128

Good news for 128 owners who want to use their '128 mode' to play games — Mastertronic has started a cheapo range of 128 games on disk, costing just £4.99 each. The bad news is that the first two offerings, *Kikstart* and

*The Lost V8*, are merely 64 conversions.

*Kikstart* looks identical but seems to run slower — more like junior *Kikstart*. *The Lost V8* has almost identical graphics, speech and sound but it does have an

extra phase — you start on Mars and have to pick up 15 fuel rods before going back to Earth. The only real plus is a very fast loading speed — if you've got a 1570 or 1571 drive. Can someone else do better (please)?



Here it is, the new look 64 (see story left)

**Petspeed for 128:** probably the first 'official' Basic compiler for the 64, *Petspeed* is now available for the 128. The new version supports the 128's Basic 7.0, is claimed to run compiled programs up to 40 times faster than Basic itself and uses the full 128K of memory — so who needs machine-code? *Petspeed* 128 is available from System Software of Oxford and costs a whopping £49.95 on disk. More details on 0865 54195.

**Digidrum Mark 3:** an enhanced version of the Digidrum drum machine for the Commodore 64 has just been announced by its U.K. distributors Syndromic Music. The good news for existing Digidrum owners is that you'll be able to get the software update for £14.95. Digidrum 3 itself costs £79.99. One of the main improvements is a new Editor which lets you swap and copy sounds as well as being able to mix two or more sounds together. More details on 01 883 1335.

**Share your peripherals:** If you've got two computers and only one set of peripherals, *Hardware's Ltd* may be able to solve your problem with the T-Switch. It's a device that links two Commodores (Vic 16 64 Plus/4) to one set of peripherals via the serial port. A switch determines which computer can access the printer or disk drive. It also incorporates a reset switch for the devices attached. T-Switch costs £24.50 and you can get more details on 0493 764040.

**More MPS ROMs:** remember MPS Software, the people who do a replacement ROM chip to give the MPS 801 printer true descenders? Well, now they're offering three more replacement ROMs, each with a different font. There's 'Tech' (£14.95) which looks like the figures you get at the bottom of cheque books, there's 'Italic' (£14.96) and 'Springs' (£14.95), a variation on the standard character set with straighter lines, less curves and true descenders. MPS Software are at 17 Bowes Rd, London N13 8UX.

EXCLUSIVE

# A Flash Of Genius!

## THE NEW 64 MULTIMODEM

**GIVES YOU DATABASES, BULLETIN  
BOARDS, ELECTRONIC MAIL,  
PRESTEL — ALL ON YOUR  
COMMODORE 64 OR 128**



At last! The perfect modem for your Commodore® 64 or 128, giving you access to Prestel®, Micronet®, viewdata and a host of other services — plus user-user communications.

It couldn't be simpler. The 64 Multimodem has autodial and autoanswer, with all comms

software on-board in ROM. 64 Multimodem fits your Commodore's cartridge port, and has just one external connection — the telephone lead.

The 64 Multimodem is menu driven and multispeed, with CCITT V21/23 and Bell 103 standards, handling baud rates of 300/300, 1200/75 and 75/1200.

Functions include save and print frame end automailbox with edit and save

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# BUZZ

## Dan Dare and Digby

Avid readers of the Eagle will know of the heroic exploits of Commander Dan Dare and his sidekick Digby



in defending the earth from the designs of the evil Makon. Virgin's game due out late this



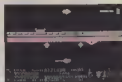
month features the erstwhile hero in another tangle with the nasty green alien who's attempting to colonize the earth.

Programmer Andy Wilson has attempted to keep to the original feel of the strip as much as possible as the screen shots show. The game is an arcade adventure but it plays in a style closer to a straight adventure by suggesting possible options. We're trying to get our hands on it as soon as you read this.



Yet another oriental fighting game is due for release on the 64. Gremlin's *The Way of the Tiger* attracted plenty of praise when it first appeared on the Spectrum, a month or two back. *TWOT*, as it's affectionately known, features a number of different scenarios for fighting, including unarmed combat and weapons like poles and swords. There's plenty of variety and lots of gore, so we'll be ninjaling away with this one just as soon as we can.

This is the viewscreen from Microprose's *Gunship*, due shortly. It promises to be the F-15 Strike Eagle for helicopter enthusiasts, with options for flying Search, Destroy, Rescue and Cover missions in an AH-64 Apache. Microprose boast revolutionary 3D graphics and terrain with real elevation and dynamic speed. Sounds pretty hairy.



Allo, ça va mas copains, pourquoi est-ce que je parle le français. C'est because the Franch sont invading. Mais oui! Le picture est taken from Mendorégore a graphic adventure from Infogrames. Le game can be joué par four players avec each person trying to solve the Mystery of King Jorlen. This mystery is contained in a grand chateau but to solve it on doit solve the mysteries surrounding neuf autres châteaux in the Land of Mendorégore. Comprit? Bon un review suivit next ish, polish up on your franglais.



This is a screen from Jeff Minter's latest game for the 64, *Iridis Aika*. The game is a mix of two different sub genres featuring an extremely cute droid, who turns himself into a fighter aircraft with devastating firepower. In other words it's a Jeff shoot 'em up special and there doesn't seem to be a llama in sight until you look at the score line

# ACROJET

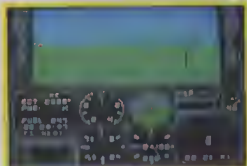
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US GOLD**

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£14.95/disk**

If you thought *Solo Flight* was a challenge, with its basic propeller-driven training plane, *Acrojet* provides even more thrills. It's an aerobatic simulator using the Jim Bede designed 805J plane. If that means nothing to you it's the aircraft James Bond flew through an aeroplane hanger in the film "Octopussy".

This is a very demanding plane to fly and it's been involved in at least 24 recorded accidents. And since I got hold of the simulator that has more than doubled. This simulator is one which really does live up to its real life counterpart!

Being an aerobatic simulator, you're set a number of absolute competition events with varying degrees of difficulty. To help you, you're given a comprehensive flight instruction manual, as well as an



**Try the easiest manoeuvres first — simply fly around a set of five pylons as quickly as possible.**

operations manual has sections covering such matters, including lots of information on aerodynamics.

Now you've learned the basics, we can start on the ten aerobatic and competition events. These are:

- **Pylon Race** — simplest event, involves getting airborne, racing round five pylons arranged in a square and getting back as quickly as possible
- **Stalom Race** — get airborne, go round four pylons in a cross-cross manner and in a set pattern.
- **Ribbon Cut** — take off, fly through two gates, cutting the ribbon suspended between them as you pass through
- **Inverted Ribbon Cut** — same as above but you fly upside down, which means your pitch controls are reversed — a special challenge
- **Ribbon Roll** — pass under one gate, perform a 360 degree roll before passing under the second gate in level flight.
- **Under Ribbon Race** — pass under three gates in sequence, this time without cutting the ribbon.
- **Looping Under Ribbon** — a difficult one this, fly through the gate, then do a loop over the gate.

As you come out of the bottom of the loop, you must go under the gate again

● **Spot Landing** — climb to at least 2000 feet and try to land on exactly the spot marked on the runway. The further away you are the last points you get. If you don't land on the runway you've crashed!

● **Cuben Eight** — most difficult of all: fly west through the west gate, do a half loop above it, followed by a half-roll on the descent, as you aim to fly through the east gate. And so



**Concorde ace Captain John Hutchinson flew into the CU offices again this month to try out his aerobatic skills on Acrojet. Not just a flight sims expert, he's also become a parachutist. BBC viewers will have seen him make his first freefall jump on the recent Holiday Air '86 programme.**

outside 3-D view which shows not only the airplane but also the runway and the various obstacles and gates you will have to negotiate during your competition manoeuvres.

Before you start things your plane around, you'll find it helpful to practice some of the basic manoeuvres: climbing, diving, turning and especially landing (you guessed it, it's pretty tricky). To help you along, the very well-written



**Choose from a set of ten aerobatic events.**

**Time and score are displayed after each event.**





It goes on until you've described a figure of eight — makes your stomach turn.

■ **Flame-out Landing** — similar to spot landing but you've got to land without using any power.

If these set pieces aren't sufficient challenge for you, you can select your own course from six of the

and finishing in one piece. You can get bonus points for flying in more difficult weather conditions.

So how did it fly? *Acrojet* is very sensitive. You've got to keep constant control of the plane with your joystick whilst keeping an eagle eye on the flight and engine instruments. Remember, most of these competitions are done very close to the ground which leaves very little margin for error. If you allow the engine to overheat, it could

**Set degree of difficulty and your aircraft's performance.**



events described above.

To score highly, you must complete events as quickly as possible (except landing events) but you do get consolation points for flying correctly

**Pass under the gates without cutting the ribbon on the top.**



**This time cut the ribbon as you fly through the gate.**

damage it, and you might have to attempt a forced landing.

Engine sound affects are good, and so is the accuracy of instrumentation except for the artificial horizon which sometimes displays the plane as banking when you can see on the outside 3-D view and on the compass that the wings are level. This is irritating because you need the accuracy of information when you're looking sideways or backwards.

Having completed all my events, I found *Acrojet* completely absorbing and very exciting. Moreover, for such a complex game, it's extremely good value for money, it's given me a taste for the aerobatic displays I used to do in the RAF — any vacancies in the Red Arrows?

John Hutchinson



**Use your instruments to check speed, altitude and pitch.**



**Landing is probably the most difficult part of Acrojet — fasten your seat belt.**

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**8**  
Overall

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**CRL**

# SHOGUN

**COMMODORE  
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Many of the current crop of samurai games, like themselves on the fascination we all seem to have with being able to drop someone at fifteen paces with a twitch of an eyelash. James Clavell's bestselling 'Shogun' novel released a few years back must bear the responsibility for much of the popular interest with Japanese culture. Shimo chi, you might call it. So it's funny that this adaptation should take its place very much at the back of the samurai games case.

Shogun, though, is not a fighting game, it's a yappin' game. It's all about making it to the top of the Japanese social scale—becoming the Shogun. To do this you will have to bribe, belittle, kill and co-opt the other characters in the game. All you need is to gather twenty followers to become Shogun day, but in a place like Japan trust is not easily won.

Once the game is loaded you are given the choice of being any character in the game. Take my tip, be a samurai; they're well 'aid and they're the key to the game. Then you're into it with only your wits for support to begin with.

The first thing that struck me was all the pretty screens and the cutely drawn characters. Then I realised I could walk around in mid-air and occasionally even through solid objects, just like you would in a typical maze adventure, just in fact like you did in Virgin's finest moment, Sorcery. It's then you

Like all the other characters, you can walk around in mid-air.



realise that they just can't shake that game off.

Shogun isn't a maze adventure but it does use some of those principles, and this destroyed some of the game's credibility for me. Not too much though, because, as you should know by now I loved Sorcery on the Amstrad 486.

Another problem is one that I

Will news that Yamaha has befriended Suzuki really affect your progress?



inspect you find in the book. You can't remember what and who half the characters are about. So when the screen scrolls up information about Lord Ishido surrendering to Sarnisi Suzuki you feel like turning through the diamante passages to find out what the half difference this is likely to have on your career path to being Shogun. It's well worth making a few notes on who you run into, but I doubt if you'll find the information that gets flashed up is of much use, because it's too quick to digest as you're playing unless you pause the game frequently.

You pause the game and make all your other decisions and actions with an icon system. There are ten of them at the bottom of the screen which allow you to take, drop, give, examine, order pause, belittle, attack, yield and save to tape. No complaints here, they're all self explanatory and easy to use. The most important of these are the order icon which allows you, once you have influenced a character (belittle them, bribe them, or fight them) to tell them what to do. Get them to protect you and do your dirty work.

Taking and dropping allows you to pick up many of the items you'll find along the route. Shields and prast wheels all have their uses as does fish, sake and cherries which replenish your strength. You'll also find money scattered around which is useful for bribing people.

Shogun really has to stand and fall on its character interplay and this is

really where its fault lies. Although I found it amusing at times to do all this wheezing and dealing I was never quite sure if it was getting me anywhere. You only visible sign of



Text above the set inform you of your location.

this is your followon count which tends to fluctuate.

I befriended Lady Yotaka in one game, thinking it was wise move only to have the miserable old cow turn on me thirty seconds later and do me in!

In all the time I played I never exactly shone in the popularity stakes. Some would say this is grim realism I'm sure, but I was bribing, belittling and killing people left right and centre. Clearly you don't get to be a Shogun being a weakhouse.

Strategy games of this type have something of an unpredictable appeal but I liked the mood of the thing, though sometimes I felt that I was getting in to a stalemate.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**7**  
Overall

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To lure the bull nearer to you, you may wave the cloak. But this gets him real mad! If you wave it enough the bull will scrapp his foot across the ground before herling towards you at high speed.



Dodging of toros is easy enough bet if and when you are caught you may not get away for the bull seems to take great pleasure in tossing you about like a rag doll and then crushing you like a grape. When this

◀ You won't be proud to see your name on this screen.

happens, out come the stretchers — looks like your matador days are over. Oh well, there's always the next game!

Sometimes, toady sometimes mad you'll be left generous and lets you up, or even accidentally knocks

## ● RAGING BEAST ●

**COMMODORE  
64/128  
FIREBIRD**

**Price:  
£1.99/cass**

Did I fancy being England's answer to El Cardoba? You do? Then now's your chance with Firebird's latest cheapos offering, *Raging Beast*. So grab your cloak, you matador and here we go.

When the game has loaded you are presented with an impressive screen showing a matador bravely tackling a fierce bull. Underneath is proclaimed "El mayor de la plaza", which, I am reliably informed, means The King of the Ring. And how pleased I was when my name was proudly slotted into one of these screens only to be told that this one meant The King of the Hospital.

The actual game is quite tricky to get the hang of, but being a cool dude, I was soon defeating those steak sandwiches by the dozen. And before anyone boycotts this game because of cruelty to animals don't

Try to stay on the bull for as long as you can without getting tossed like a pancake.



▲ The bull looks an smugly as they carry you off on a stretcher.



bother, there just isn't any.

The object of the game is to dodge the bull with the aid of your trusty red cloak earning points and surviving until a neg is thrown from the crowd which you have to place around the bull's neck. This may sound easy but with five hundred pounds of beef chasing after you, believe me, it isn't.

you onto his back. And you can earn some extra points by slaying me as long as possible.

After taking a bit of a bashing on *Raging Beast* I desperately wanted to beat the first bull. Neither graphics nor sound are spectacular but Firebird must score full marks for originality and value.

Ferdy Hamilton

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**8**  
Overall



When the going gets tough reach for your machine gun.

found them) include steam guns and stn grenades and can be brought to bear with the fire button while standing still.

To help you, a large part of the screen is used to display icons showing your current actions. A sub-elevation of the whole building can be called up at anytime and a flashing spot indicates your position. Getting around is still a problem though, certain lifts only go to certain floors and you might well be attacked whilst waiting for one.

The game concludes when you have freed your friend and escaped via the subterranean river by which you first entered the building, and your score depends on how many answers and photographs you get.

At first, I was impressed with the game and, as a technician

## NEXUS

### COMMODORE 64/128 NEXUS PRODUCTIONS

Price:  
£9.95/cass

It arrived in one of the most ridiculous packages I've ever seen, looking something like a squashed hand-grenade! Would I find explosive action inside? Read on.

You play the role of a journalist working on the Cienega newspaper. Your editor tells you: "A friend of yours was investigating a drugs racket in Colombia. We've just heard he's been kidnapped by the drugs baron. I want you to go down there, get him out and get me a scoop story."

The game is set within the drug ring's Colombian HQ, a massive complex of rooms, lifts and passages. NEXUS is an undercover group trying to break the drugs ring from the inside, and will supply you with vital skills, weapons and information. The top 10th of your screen shows the section of corridor or room you are currently in, and all the action takes place here. Beneath is a plethora of message panels, direction indicators, pictures and maps.

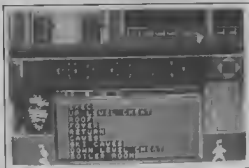
The game strategy is a classic 'search and solve' type, with a bit of kung fu style fighting. The 'search' part is very reminiscent of *Impossible Mission*: turn to face a fitting or a piece of furniture and you search it for clues. The briefing manual contains 32 questions, the answers to which are split into four parts and scattered about the building. When you have collected some information, you will need to find an editing terminal to read the answers, and a transmitting terminal to send the answers back to your editor.

Once you have found a camera, you can also photograph rooms and people and transmit them back for extra points. The personnel terminals

can be used to examine the film on any of the Nexus agents, and you can match their photo to their particular skills such as feigning or ornaments.

While in a corridor, you will meet

enemies, I still am. Having said that, the actual game play is pathetically repetitive. Most of the corridors look the same and the rooms are all similar. The main tasks of searching quickly became a bit of



Searching the Nexus Complex for information.

up with guards who will try to stop you, unless you have a valid pass. Nexus agents are recognisable by their pictures which appear on the screen while the character is in sight.

All your movements are controlled by the joystick, and the control system is rather complicated. You can walk, run, do forward and backward rolls, flying kicks and punches. Weapons (whm you've

a drug, as did the guard's relentless attempts to beat you unconscious and imprison you! Some of the messages that appear on the screen are so small, they're almost impossible to read on a tv set, and although the other characters can talk to you, your total vocabulary consists of 'bat kott!' This is supposed to be a greeting! No wonder the guards don't seem to like you...

Fred Reid



Digitised faces enable you to identify friends and enemies.

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Thoughtness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

5  
Overall





# TAU CETI

**COMMODORE  
64/128**

**C.R.L.**

**Price:  
£9.95/cass**

**Screen  
\*Star\***

Targetting a  
Control Tower.

Here is a shoot 'em up all dressed up with futuristic graphics that are absolutely meeting to play. What I mean is, I like it.

It goes like this. Colonists from earth arrived on Tau Ceti in 2050 A.D. and lived there happily for nearly a hundred years until a vicious plague called Eucha's Syndrome ravaged the planet and forced the survivors to flee.

Back on earth scientists were busy beavering away on Eucha's and managed to come up with a cure.

The surrounding colonies on Alpha Centauri and Beta Hydri were cleared of the disease but Tau Ceti posed a

more difficult problem.

The heavy colonists did not de-activate Tau Ceti's defence systems in their haste to get away from the planet. So these robot systems ran amok on Tau Ceti after the colonists fled and killed a landing party from Earth who had been sent in to retake the planet.

A full scale invasion was considered too costly to mount and the defence systems on Tau Ceti were, in any case, capable of resisting this if they needed to.

The only way Tau Ceti could be re-colonised was to send in a single armed Ground Skimmer to shut down

the Fusion Reactor in the planet's capital city, Centralis.

See you, your 64, and your copy of *Tau Ceti*.

Right from the opening screen you know you're playing a game that somebody somewhere put a lot of effort into. The attention to detail is impressive, especially on the metallic looking view from the cockpit.

Type 'Launch' and the sliding door open to release the Skimmer into Tau Ceti's inhospitable, desert terrain. First thing you notice are the buildings are all valuable assets and your employers, Gal Corp, will have to fund the construction of new



The  
Skimmer  
blasts its  
Anti Missile  
Missiles  
with just  
0.436  
minutes to  
Sunset.

dwellings out of next year's budget once the planet has been sequestered. Equally impressive in the graphics department are the Skimmer's many

controls. Your Equip function allows you access to a building repair, refueling and rearming facility -- pretty useful this as those droids will give you Skimmer a beating.

The extent of damage to your ship is given to you when you request a status report. The information on your location and your ship appears

# Screen Star



**Preparing to enter a Civilian Supply Centre — might be something useful in here.**

in the window at just below your main cockpit view. An on-screen Pad allows you to make notes of anything of interest that you think may help you. New Pad selects a fresh page in the note pad.

Most impressive of all these controls is the map of the planet showing information about all the cities on Tau Ceti.

The Skimmer is highly armed with a single mounted laser operated by the joystick. A simple blast as you pass type gun.

But there's other more sophisticated weaponry as well; like the Anti-Missile Missiles (AMMs), Starlight Flares, Infra-red night sights, Scanners, Planetary compasses, and a Command Computer.

You have so much at your disposal that it tends to give a false sense of security, a feeling that there is nothing you couldn't cope with. Which is definitely not the case because even though you have several compensated controls you will still need to think and react quickly if you are going to succeed.

Understanding how to use all your equipment is essential in Tau Ceti. Everything works and serves an important purpose.

The Skimmer can operate at ground level as well as flying, under joystick control, across the planet. When at ground mode you are in direct contact with the Skimmer's computer via a terminal.

**The scanner shows several buildings ahead and you can see them too from the Skimmer's cockpit.**

As you travel the planet you will notice some impressive graphics. A far off star disappears slowly beyond the horizon as Tau Ceti's suns through one of her band-long cyclists.

A shooting star or possibly an interplanetary vessel drifts by slowly.

## Playing The Game

The objective is to get inside the Main Control Reactor on Centrales. You will need to assemble a cunning system with rods you have found by searching the various buildings of the Tau Ceti cities.

Actually getting inside the buildings takes a bit of doing as well.

You have to watch for the characteristic flickering air lock and then fly in slowly.

Once inside, you're automatically returned to ground mode and you can begin to explore the building. Typing Lock will show you a view of the

interior and any useful items that are to be found there.

It is important to be able to identify the various buildings. Some of these are Jump Pad terminals — Tau Ceti's futuristic underground system.

You can use this for hyper spacing to other cities. It's a little dangerous though, as native 'Sand Hoppers' tend to congregate around the exits.

to Jump Terminals closing corridors.

Some of the other structures looking buildings are Civilian Supply Centres, Military Supply Centres, Fortresses, Control Towers, Substation Reactors, and your main target, the Main Control Reactor itself.

The robots are massive building like structures themselves — dandy Hunters Mark I, II, and III's.

I actually enjoyed the combat with the Hunters. Although you are advised by Gal Corp not to damage the buildings nobody said anything about the droids. If you like a good shoot 'em up you can be as happy as Larry skimming the planet and

blasting them, like a Blade Runner (Sorry to bring that up CR).

I enjoyed the story line of *Tau Ceti*. It was refreshingly original but the same cannot be said of the game design. It borrows heavily on lots of games that have gone before. It's got a bit of *Elite*, a bit of *Quake*, *Menace One*, *Wolf*, rather a lot of *Quake* *Manus One*, really, and all its controls and scanners that have been used in dozens of games.

That said, it's a lot more playable than any of those games for my money, and, unlike *Elite* and *Quake*, you don't need to get up a fortnight for an average game.

CR has totally redeemed themselves with *Tau Ceti*. After the chronic *Blade Runner* and awful *Space Doom* it is difficult to understand how the same company can have such wide variations of quality in their game catalogue.

Now back to blasting Hunters.

Engene Lacey



# GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

**COMMODORE  
64/128  
ELITE**

**Price:  
£9.95/cass  
£14.95/disk**

Having made your way past the Ice Palace it's on to the mansion houses. The blurs are goblins which swiftly attempt to hunt you down, diving out of the windows.



How many games and adventures can you think of where a fair maiden is kidnapped and imprisoned by a nasty character only to be rescued by a young prince? The answer is a host of a lot. The plot is standard foldiers and goes back to legends like Daphne and Beauty and the Beast down the ages to Superman and King Kong. Some of the stories are new and some are classics. The same goes for computer games.

*Ghosts and Goblins* falls into the classic variety of arch mythological. It's a faithful representation of Capcom's con op of the same name and Elite's second major arcade conversion of the year.

Whereas Donkey Kong was flawed in several places Chris Butler, whose previous work on *Commando* was fine but nothing special, had done a great job picking all the elements of the original into the 64.

The gameplay is straightforward. Start right across the screen fighting off the nasties until you reach the dragon's lair where your girl is incarcerated. Nothing new, nothing



**The Ice Palace. A set of platforms to work your way around — guarded by goblins and man-eating plants.**

good seven or eight levels in the original but only four could be crammed into the conversion.

From the graveyard you proceed onto level two, the Ice Palace. This is the best bit as you acquire a golden and moving platform and then proceed on to a house filled with nasty little goblins which leap out the window at you. The final section is a house patrolled by great white trolls.

At the end of each level you'll have to kill all the enemies, the gatekeeper in order to collect a key to move onto the next level. To come there's a selection of bats, fireball spitting turtles, demons and a particularly raggy bridge where flames leap up and consume your knight unless you're very sharp.

The final challenge is the dragon

that kidnapped your girl in the first place and it's a cruel one (well it is for me) to break down the lion segments of the dragon's body.

There's nothing special here, just a very good implementation of an excellent arcade game. My only real gripe is that I'd like to have seen a slightly larger character. The knight is only one square high, whereas the arcade character is huge. That's the limitations of the 64 as much as anything else. Though I suspect some day we will see ways of getting round this. There are people who have already found ways to axe the width of the screen and border, so I reckon it's only a matter of time. Meanwhile as long as the anime's as good as this I'm not going to complain too loudly.

Mike Pattenden

**The mansion house guarded by the large white giants. Make your way around the ladders killing each one. Several hits are needed to stop each one. Watch out too for the birds.**



original but fortune joystick clanking, fireball on stabbing action.

You begin in a haunted graveyard where zombies rise up out of the ground like a scene from Spielberg's 'Poltergeist'. From here on it's only you and your wits separating you from an early death. You have two lives. The first trench from a nasty makes you jump out of your armour. The second trench reduces you to a pile of bones.

If you fail, as you undoubtedly will many times, the game won't send you right back to the beginning. You'll start from a predetermined point along the way if you stab the joystick quickly.

Chris has done well to squeeze all the elements in the arcade game into his conversion, but don't expect the whole game to be there. There's a

**Screen  
Star**

Graphix	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**8**  
Overall

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## COMMODORE 64/128 DURELL

Price:  
£9.95/cass

The hooded figure of Saboteur makes his entrance a little late in the day for a spy-style arcade adventure. The games-buying public are on the alert for poor imitation, prepared to catch out the fast buck makers.

They may not be quite quick enough to track down Saboteur. He's pretty slick for a Spectrum conversion. Large, well animated, plenty of flash moves and an atmospheric building to explore.

The task before him is pure hit and run. Infiltrate a high security building and steal a disk with details of rebel leaders contained on it before they are released to security stations. Then make your escape via helicopter.

The odds are stacked against you in the shape of guards and nasty alarms which snap at your heels draining your energy constantly. Neither these or the guards ever



kill you outright. They'll chase you mindlessly around draining your energy. It's fairly easy to accept simply by dodging onto the next screen. If your energy is particularly low pressing will rebound it to an acceptable level. Don't do this unless

## SABOTEUR

**You've clubbed the guard senseless and you're now making your way up the warehouse.**

it's really necessary because there's a time limit.

In fact the biggest enemy is time, ticking away rapidly. You only have minutes to get the disk before the details get released and the rebel cruise ends well and truly up against the wall.

As you move around the converted warehouse you'll find various items

The controls are easy to master and in fact the whole game is very comfortable to get along with. There's no fiddling around with obscure icons or attempts at needless complication. It's nice to be able to sit down and play a game after a cursory glance at the instructions. It also has a good degree of the atmosphere necessary to this kind of game. In fact this has everything the likes of *Max Headroom* lacked.

My only real gripe is I'm not sure that there's quite enough to it. By



**The start screen. Unlike the Amstrad version you can't cross the river in the boat. Boo hiss for laziness, Durell.**

that can be used to your advantage. The guards for example have been very careless about leaving knives and shurikens lying around. One other item it's essential you find is the bomb which is down in the sewers. Once you're carrying this though you can't pick up any of the weapons. Also useful are the computer terminals dotted around the place which give you access through doors when activated.

**It's a dead end go back and take a different route. Just in case you're wandering what the purpose of all these urns is, there isn't one.**

that I mean it's not very hard. But running out of time there's no reason why your saboteur should come to a sticky and amongst the dogs and guards. Hence I can see that once you've solved the game you may well struggle to find any further challenge to bring you back to it.

Saboteur is not exactly a mammoth game. You only have to go up and across a few screens to reach the helicopter for example. The time limit is ninety nine seconds and there's no reason why you shouldn't be able to do it in less. It's tight but definitely completable — especially if you take the easy option and go straight for the helicopter.

Some random element would have been a good idea to incorporate. I feel. As it stands it's more *Possible Mission* than anything else.

All said and done though, fair representations entertainment. Nexus take note.

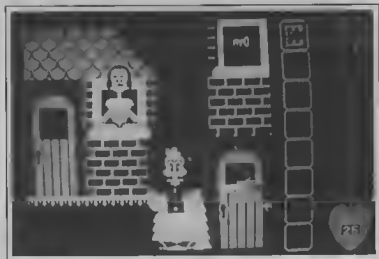
Mike Pattenden

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**7**  
Overall



Olive waits for a big wet smacker but Popeye hasn't collected any hearts yet.



**COMMODORE  
64/128  
MACMILLAN  
SOFTWARE**

**Price:  
£8.95/cass**

## POPEYE

If somebody had asked me for a good idea for a computer game, Popeye and his chums wouldn't have been at the top of my list. But Macmillan have this idea that Popeye is the most recognised cartoon around.

The Macmillan game represents the second attempt to produce a game based on the muscle-bound sailor. Parker Toys produced a plug-in cartridge two years ago based on the Popeye coin-op.

out, he must deliver them to Lucious Olive to get a big mushy smacker.

This is not so easy — love never is (such wisdom — Ed), since there are lots of meenies around town. The obvious one, Bluto, roams the High Street and for a thug he boasts a fair degree of intelligence. The others, which include a shark, a dragon and a flying witch, are much more predictable.

Some hearts are placed behind closed doors, for which a key must be found, whilst others are placed in the path of the meenies.

But wait, there's something missing. You guessed it: also placed around town are cans of spinach which give Popeye extra lives — no spinach and no more kases for Popeye.

The best feature of the game is the graphics, they could have stepped right out of the cartoon. Although the animation is a little



blocky, the characters are large and move in a very realistic 'Popeye' way. Also, the scrupulous attention to detail impressed me — Popeye's wink is as good as ever. Ug, ug, ug. As well as moving from screen to screen, the characters can move in front and behind each other. They can also move in and out of the scenery. This gives the game a nice feeling of depth.

But the game falls down on playability. Due to the size of the characters, Popeye is slow to react to the joystick, thus making the game very tough. But with a little perseverance, it all becomes very enjoyable. Nevertheless, another cartoon-based game fails to come up with anything beyond the standard 'pick up' swordplay. A shame. Popeye fans should enjoy this game, but the rest of you better have a go at it first in your local computer store.

Colin Clarke



Thuggish Bluto patrols the street whilst Popeye sowers behind an upstairs window.

This one was really disappointing. In it Popeye had to catch the hearts that were floating down amongst the platform structure where the game took place. It failed because it seemed to revolve Popeye in too much turning away from Bluto.

Anyway, we all know that Popeye loves Olive Oyl, although why is anyone's guess. To prove his love for her he must collect 25 hearts which are randomly distributed around his home town. When he's dug them all



Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**6**  
Overall



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CUT



# 'Going

Next month Richard Branson sets out with his Challenger II boat in a second attempt to win the coveted Blue Riband for the fastest crossing in a passenger vessel. To coincide with the record breaking bid, Virgin are releasing a game. It's based on the boat's voyage and Richard Branson's whole business empire. Eugene Lacey put on his deck pumps and had a sneak look at the game.

View from the cockpit. Watch out for icebergs.



**R**ichard Branson will need to leave home with a lot more than his American Express card when he sets off from the Ambrose Light, New York in the £1.5 million Virgin Atlantic Challenger II in his second attempt to win the coveted Blue Riband for England.

The cost of the boat is only a drop in the Ocean, so to speak, of the total cost of the attempt. As Virgin's Fiona McNeil put it: "We just keep on spending the money."

The Virgin Mega Store in Oxford Street, London, will be in permanent contact with Challenger as she cruises through the Atlantic where a specially constructed press suite will be dishing out live booze and updates on Challenger's progress to passing members of the press.

Everything has been calculated to generate maximum publicity for the Virgin Group in the hope that this display of the best of Britishness will encourage you to buy more Phil Collins records, plane tickets to New York, pop videos, books, cassettes of *Now Games*, *Shogun*, *Don Dars* and a sea of other Virgin products.

July 4th has been chosen for the start which also happens to be American Independence Day and the

day that President Reagan, by pure coincidence, will also be in New York harbour re-opening the Statue of Liberty after its year-long closure for renovation.

Challenger will need to average 45 knots — that's 40mph to the likes of you and I — if she is to crack the current Blue Riband record of 3 days and ten hours.

The Blue Riband is the accolade being chased by Branson and his six men crew. It is the sword for the fastest sea crossing of the Atlantic in a passenger ship — last won by the paddle steamer *Great Western* in 1839.

top of the screen with the Wheelhouse below with the rest of the instruments.

Equipment is used by standing in front of it and pressing the five buttons on the joystick. This will cause a window to open showing the controls of that particular piece of equipment in close up.

As the instruments and equipment are on different levels the game involves a great deal of dashing around the boat.

The top of the screen will also show the time taken, fuel used, speed, and status to the vessel.

Through the cockpit window you can



Section view — showing the main playing area of the game.

Challenger I came within a whisker of clinching the Blue Riband last Summer and she won't have done had she not hit floating debris just 138 nautical miles from the 'winning post' at the Bishop's Rock Light House just off the Scilly Isles.

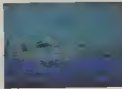
See oncoming hazards such as icebergs, fishing vessels, and the refueling ships with which you have to dock.

Docking is a risky manoeuvre that can easily cost you the Riband if you do not fire up the Challenger with the fuel ship correctly and approach at just the right speed.

One thing the game designers have not been allowed to put into the game is the sinking of the Challenger and the

## Screen layout

The main play area is a cross section of the boat showing the cockpit at the



# for it!



loss of the crew. If you mess things up the game ends with a rescue.

## Playing the Game

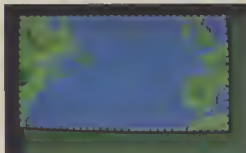
The game is divided up into the four separate legs of the crossing — following closely the planned event and the log of last year's attempt.

The first stretch takes you to 550

e whopping 1,000 mile stint.

You will need to check your navigation hourly on this stretch of the 'Great Circle' — as you head for your third rendezvous in the middle of the Atlantic ocean.

The view from the cockpit is more difficult than before and there are huge 'rogue' waves to contend with as an additional hazard.



Map will show your current position and refueling stops.

miles off the coast of Halifax, Nova Scotia. It's a busy fishing region so you will need to use the radar constantly to avoid colliding with trawlers.

You begin with a near full tank of fuel even though you will only need approximately half to get you to your first rendezvous.

The extra fuel on the first leg will enable you to go astray at the beginning of the game. There is less leniency the further you get.

The second leg is much tougher. You will need the radar as you are travelling mostly at night. A full tank of fuel is required to take you to your next rendezvous at the Flemish Pass —

The last leg should occur approximately sixty hours after leaving New York (if all goes according to plan). The main thing to concentrate on will be the speedometer to make up for any lost time required to break the record.

At no stage at sea is it wise to attempt to push Challenger too fast. This increases the stress on the boat, especially in adverse weather conditions, and may cause her to break up.

Scoring is based on the miles covered in the time taken. Deductions are made for damage to the ship, running out of fuel, not eating, or neglecting Virgin business affairs.



## Realistic graphics

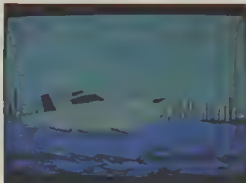
The programmers were given a brief to make the simulation of Branson as life-like as the 54 could manage. To do this they have made his head fairly large (it isn't that much larger — Ed) to accommodate his broad smile and fash hair.

One other Virgin Games character

▲ Look after the engine and don't go too fast or it will over-heat.

may make a starring appearance in the game if the programmers can find enough memory — the Laughing Shark who starred in all of Virgin's early game advertisements. Next month Screen Scene will have a full review of the Challenger game.

▼ Title screen shows Challenger roaring out of New York.





## Second time around

Lessons learned from the first attempt have aided the design of Challenger II. The most dramatic innovation is a switch from the twin-hulled Catamaran design to a single, aluminum-hulled vessel.

This will give Challenger II greater strength in the water and allow more room to load the engines and instruments.

The crew also discovered that the 'Cat' really only performed well at very high speeds — in excess of 70 mph.

Challenger will take the 'Great Circle Route' — the quickest way across and the one thought to involve the least dangers.

From the Ambrose Lighthouse she will head north to the first refueling point off Halifax, Nova Scotia. More fuel will be taken on board 200 miles East of Newfoundland before her final stop — a rendezvous with an Esso fuel ship in Mid Atlantic.

At that point it's throttle up and seatbelts on for the home stretch — the dash to Solihy.

## The dangers

Early July was chosen for the attempt because at that time the Atlantic is thought to be at its calmest.

But there are still many perils to worry the crew. Although the threat of icebergs is thought to be lessened at this time of year there is likely to be fog coming off the Grand Banks near Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Fog will make it difficult to see any floating debris or stray icebergs.

The critical stretch is the most northerly 300 miles of the arc. As well as icebergs visible above the surface of the water there may also be deadly "growlers" that float just beneath the surface.

During this part of the trip the

**Branson — hoping for a publicity boost for his businesses through winning the Blue Ribband.**



**Choy Blyth: "We are going for it."**



**Steve Ridgway — the organizer.**



**Peter Downie — had to pull out of the last moment due to a broken leg.**



**Dag Pike — the navigator.**



weather experts will be consulted constantly to find the safest route.

Challenger has the most advanced monitoring equipment on board to help her avoid the hazards as well as back-up from Royal Air Force Nimrod on the northern stretch of the arc.

Apart from the risks to the vessel from icebergs, fog, and freak storms, Challenger will have to stand up to the pounding from huge Atlantic waves. The force will be so violent that the crew will have to remain strapped into their specially-designed seats for much of the 2,943 mile trip. There are no easy bunks aboard the Challenger. She has been built for speed with one aim in mind — winning the Blue Ribband.

Despite all the many dangers Cap'n Branson and his crew are confident of

success. As Senior Crewman Choy Blyth put it: "We are going for it. With all the experience we gained on the previous attempt the odds should be on our side."

## Meet the Crew

Challenger's eight-man crew are the typical mixed bag of individuals that these kind of one-off adventures bring together for once in their lifetimes.

From the world of big business is Richard Branson — Challenger's skipper and the most famous person on board.

The £300 million Virgin Group is now one of the largest leisure companies in



because of the dozens of jobs he's had in boatyards and on ships. There's not much drifting about his life now, though, as he has become one of the nine band of boat designers whose services are sought by rich customers the world over.

Steve Ridgeway is the organiser and master planner of the whole Challenger project. He is the least experienced member of the crew but



**Peter McCann — the man from Tomorrow's World.**

Europe. Not bad for a 35 year old who left school at fifteen and started his business in an old church hall selling records by mail order.

Second in command is Chay Blyth, survivor of nautical nautical achievements at sea. He was one of the first people to row the Atlantic, the first person to sail alone non-stop around the world in a westerly direction, voted yachtsman of the year in 1971, and winner of the Round Britain Race in 1978.

Blyth is clearly delighted to be in the Challenger team saying "With all the experience gained last year we think we can successfully gain the Bun Riband in 1986".

Oddly named Dag Pike is Challenger's navigator. A beard

journalist from Stroud in Gloucestershire, Dag is also an expert on the latest electronic navigational equipment. He has had plenty of powerboat experience navigating the 'Dry Marten' powerboat to two World Championships.

Peter Downie is the boat's troubleshooter and chief engineer. He was responsible for fitting out Challenger I and training all the crew last year but didn't make the attempt. This time he intends to be aboard to sort out any problems with the boat as they occur.

Senni Levi needs no introduction to devotees of power boat racing. He is simply the world's greatest designer of the vessel. A string of race winning boats bear the Levi name.

Levi's co-designer for Challenger II was 33 year old Peter Birkett from Brighton. The Challenger organisers describe Peter as a "High seas driver"

## THE CHALLENGER II

**Overall Length** 72 feet. 22.02 Metres.  
**Width** 19 feet 5.82 Metres.

**Hull** All aluminium, welded and glued to save weight.  
**Engines** Two MTU 12 396 TB turbocharged diesels each producing 200 HP at 2100 rpm. Engines mounted parallel aft of the cabin area.

**Fuel tanks** Made to Ministry of Defence specifications with a revolutionary protective honeycomb cocoon. Capable of holding 6.26 tonnes of fuel.

**Range** Challenger is capable of 860 miles at 2100 rpm — 45 knots.

**Safety Equipment** Buoyancy bags inflate in the event of an emergency and are designed to stop Challenger sinking entirely. Challenger also has inflatable rafts in the event of the flotation bags not working.

intends to make up for this by his determination. 'I really want that record', he told CU.

The final member of the team but by no means the least important is

**Senni Levi — Challenger's chief designer.**



Tomorrow's World presenter — Peter Macann. Peter will be recording the highlights of the crossing for the BBC — for a special programme to be screened later in the year.

**Peter Birkett — Co-designer.**



continued on p.31.

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### MAD DOCTOR

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### DANGEROUS IN DOUBLE TROUBLE

Help the super robot overcome Baron Greenback's latest ploy. The evil villain is building an android Dangerous! You must stop him and defeat the danger! This game is not for the faintest! Commodore 64 and Spectrum 48k.  
Sparkle rating \*\*\*\*\*

### Tower of Evil

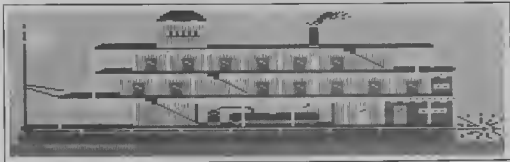
Have you ever fought a Behemoth? Well they are on your side! They guard your treasure! The Princess is imprisoned and have come equally horrendous threats! Poor old Princess Daria — locked away in the clutches of the Behemoth! They're not just happy! Commodore 16  
Sparkle rating \*\*\*\*\*

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## MURDER ON THE MISSISSIPPI

**COMMODORE  
64/128  
ACTIVISION**

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Activision, incidentally, the new parent company of Infocom) have a real winner on their hands. *Murder on the Mississippi* is an animated graphical adventure set in turn of the century America on a paddle steamer called The Delta Princess. You play the part of famed British sleuth, Sir Charles Foxworth, who, along with his trusty companion Regis, is enjoying a well earned rest aboard this luxury floating palace.

Using joystick or keyboard you can move Sir Charles all over the fast deck ship exploring the many locations which include over 20 cabins, a stateroom, a saloon, and the wheelhouse or engine room. I have to say here that as a rule I don't like graphics in adventures unless they are really worth looking

at this grisly deed and why.

There are eight other passengers and a couple of crew on board — all with seemingly footloose alibis — so, who did it? My first job was to visit the captain and his very helpfully gave me the registers containing passenger details and their cabin numbers. Armed with this information I went to these cabins and started questioning them looking for a few clues and some evidence. All the interviewing is undertaken by a series of menus, which by the use of a 'hand' cursor can be highlighted and entered.

For instance, selecting 'inspect' will have Sir Charles inspecting the nearest thing to him. Anything of use that you find can be picked up by Regis and put in his pocket for later

▲ All aboard the Delta Princess for a murderous cruise.

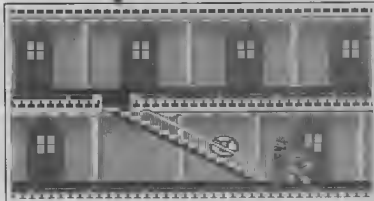
recollection. The secret of this game is getting the characters to say the right things, and by clever manipulation of evidence found and shown to the right people.

A very useful and clever device is your 'notebook'. During your conversation with the other characters you can take notes on their replies. This is inspired by Regis who will say "would you like the notebook m'lord?" Answering 'yes' you'll see the characters' statement on a blank screen. Using the cursor you can highlight certain words which will appear in the 'notebook' in Sir Charles own handwriting — very stylish. These notes can later be shown to other characters who may or may not meet in a strange way!

So, who killed Raleigh Cartwright III? Was it Judge Carter, a man who is closely tied to violence or Madam Das Plaines, the rich widow, or Daisy de Pree, a sexy southern belle who isn't what she seems, or Engineer Henry Stoker, illegitimate son of the dead Raleigh??? The list goes on. The sting in the tail is that you only have three days to solve the crime!

I must confess to being very impressed by this program, its use of text and animation, is superb and the atmosphere it creates is excellent.

Andy Moss



▲ Right behind you guys — dedicated Nagla follows his sleuthing master, Sir Charles Foxworth.

at, and as this game relies heavily on its animation, the graphics and FX need to be of the highest quality which thankfully they are.

Anyway, on with the story. In one of the cabins you'll eventually come across a body lying in a pool of blood and because of your relentless curiosity you decide to find out who

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**8**  
Overall



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A particularly  
noisy challenge to  
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the third level. A knife  
is all you need, but oh  
dead centre of the  
sprites for a hit.

The arctic forest.  
Eat dirt because  
the boozaka  
carrier's about to  
let fly.

The arcade game makers can be as glibly as the software programmers in relying on a successful formula. *Green Beret* or as it was namelessly described as *America's Russian Attack* is another rightwards scrolling game in the mode of *Kong Fu Master*, and the just converted *Ghost and Goblins*.

Like the latter it cannot be denied that *Green Beret* is fast action. The kind of the thing that will always succeed if it is done properly. And there's no denying that the Imagine team haven't made a bad job of this despite the odd glitch.



'Rescue the captives' is the simple message you are told as the game begins and your man runs past a group of struggling soldiers tied to poles.

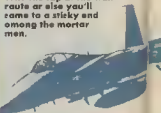
Steal the fire button and you're transported to the beginning of the game fifty or so screens away from the hostages. A drum plays a pulsating military tattoo that lasts until the game gets turned off. A siren sounds to alert the guards and



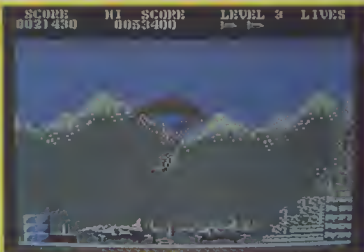
you begin your run through the first level.

Immediately you'll realise the odds you're up against. There's no array of guards armed with bazookas, machine guns and deadly kicks. There's crawling troops, mortar emplacements, parachutists and

Make your way  
past the hangers.  
Take the top of the wall  
route or else you'll  
come to a sticky end  
among the mortar  
men.



Level two and the  
going gets tough.  
Head up to the  
top of the fence.



As you head into the elrforce base more parachutists drop out of the sky and shower you.



level two when your man gets a bit lost against the black crates. Otherwise despite the odd glitch it's very easy on the eye and attractive.

The sound throughout has all the quality we've come to expect from Martin Galway. There's a massive loading tune, that persistent drumbeat and a myriad of sound effects like explosions, grenades and sirens — all adding to the atmosphere of the game.

*Green Beret* has definitely been worth the wait. It's all here, with every aspect packed in to the 54K of the Commodore. Although I get the impression the actual gameplay can become a little wearying with its charge, stab, charge, stab routine, I think you'll be playing this one for a long time. It's a really tough challenge, believe me, and no game is ever quite the same given the timing of your movements.

In giving this a screen star I add the rider that I'd like to see something new done for the 84 for a change.

Mike Paterson



gyrocopters. Your only protection is your knife and your wits. Occasionally you'll kill one of the white troops and collect a special weapon that'll give you three shots. The flamethrower is the best of these sending a huge orange jet across the screen. Great fun.

The thing that'll strike you most is how little time you have to think. There's no rest spots in the game. Delay only makes matters worse as troops rush out in greater numbers — and more often than not — shoot you in the back.

You'll find you need to hit the dirt a lot if you're going to survive. Lying down and staying is particularly effective because you're below the level of fire from machine gunners and bazooka carriers.

Gas that white commander before he escapes — his special weapon will improve your chances no end.



The gun emplacements. Who do you deal with first — the guard or the para?

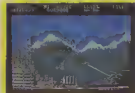


Should you snuff the misfortune of an early death among the sniper fire and mortar shells, which seems likely you won't suffer the anguish of being sent back to the beginning. You'll begin at a predetermined position along the way.

Each level ends with a particularly mean challenge. Level one has a truck load of reinforcements turn up. The sub base has a pack of guard dogs unleashed on you, and level three has three gyrocopters circling around the screen. The knife will suffice for all of them, but it's worth

saving a few shots from your special weapon to deal with those moments of crisis.

The graphics throughout are splendid. Your man is of a reasonable size, something I always like to see. Small characters make you screw your eyes up a bit. He is well animated as are all the troops, and the backgrounds are colourful. There's only one real colour clash and that's in the contempt area on



Asorghi! One more step and you'll tread on a mine. Try and jump up and you'll hit the pore. Looks like the end...



Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9  
Overall

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building a thing of you D.M., so it can impersonate you and infiltrate our security forces."

Good grief, only the world's greatest super hero Danger Mouse can stop him. First it's into the reactor and on your way to the jungle, but it looks like Greenback is one step ahead of you. He has sent out a party of robots to stop you in your tracks!

To kill each robot you must be facing it and then select the correct picture and tune from your computer joystick which is shown in the bottom-left of the screen. It's on to the jungle now as even an aeroplane isn't versatile enough to get through the tangle of trees of the jungle. The last obstacle you must cross is the crocodile infested swamps. This is done by using the crocodiles as stepping stones, à la Frogger.

You must also watch out for the deadly black, mouse eating parasites. To scare these away you must go to the top of a nearby tree and do a tarzan call so a herd of elephants will run past and scare him away, but on the tree there are snakes and monkeys with twice the strength of you, who will throw you off the tree at the slightest touch.

The third episode is quite tricky to get the hang of but after a while you will soon pick it up. The D.M. clone is almost complete as you arrive at their base. Suddenly you hear a strange buzzing sound coming from the floor, Greenback's rigged it so that there's thousands of volts running through each tile, step on it and you're Sunday roast!

The only way to shut down the Barons' plan is to activate the four switches in the right order and as destroy any signals Greenback sends out. This part of the game is wonderfully animated. You see a well-drawn picture of D.M. launch below onto the switches whilst balancing on his index finger!

When this has been done it's hip, hip hooray! Well done D.M. and all the rest but don't be too happy, you have to do it all over again but with a shorter time limit!

Creative Sparks have brought out a reasonable re-release and I see no reason why it shouldn't do well at its cheaper price. A must for all Danger Mouse fans.

Ferdy Hamilton



Good grief! Creative Sparks have released this again. After flopping about six months ago what will happen now that good ol' D.M. is at a budget price?

For those of you who haven't seen or heard of *Danger Mouse* he is a wonderful little mouse, with a pantheon flat in a Baker Street post-box. His occupation is full time super hero, and he is needed with the evil frog Baron Siles Greenback forever plotting plans to rule the world. Danger Mouse like all good super-heroes also has an assistant, this one comes in the shape of the half wit, cowardly male Pinkie! But don't expect him to be much help.

In this episode our hero has been putting his feet up for a couple of weeks and is starting to think that maybe Greenback has given up at last!

Wishful thinking. All of a sudden up comes Colonel K., head of security on the video screen informing you that Greenback is up to his nasal arities again. "He's been in the jungle

**Super rodent takes on the nasties.**

**Heave — pull that nasty Greenback out of your way.**



Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**6**  
Overall

## COMMODORE 64/128

### FIREBIRD

**Price:**  
**£7.95/cass**

Commodore music wizard Rob Hubbard has some competition at last in the shape of *We Must U.D.* — the people that coded the Innets for Bombo.

As you can see from the pics it owns more than a passing resemblance in the Tekken con-op — Bombo, which has recently been released by Elite at £9.95. This game gets praised two issues back with high marks for Graphics, Toughness, and Endurance. Bombo matches these marks and scores very highly in the sound department as well.

The game features several excellent tunes that change each time you get onto a new level.

Bombo has to collect twenty bombs from each screen whilst dodging the Eyes, Footmen, Birds, Dracs, Hives, and Ravens that are patrolling the platforms.

The opening screen features an Arabian fortress with an exotic Turkish Delight TV commercial pace of music accompanying it.

Bombo moves around the screen by using large leaps when you press the fire button. Once he has taken all you can only guide him left and right, until he finally sinks back to the ground, or onto one of the platforms. You can also make him drop immediately by pulling back on the joystick.

Manoeuvring Bombo is the real skill element in the game. You have to be careful to judge exactly where you want him to land before you make the leap.

Working your way through the barrels is easy peasy and you try to collect them in sequence — each flashing barrel after another, to earn bonus points.

Sometimes the flashing barrel will be at the top of a pile of ordinary ones — so you have to work out how to get to the top. Tough, I can tell you, but good fun too.

Every 20 often the game lets a power pit at you. Grab this and Bombo turns gold and dons a cloak which enables him to fly anywhere he likes without any nasties gilling in the way. The power also turns the barrels gold for a short time adding several points to their value.

# WHITE VIPER

Each structure of platforms is different and set against a colourful backdrop. Screen two is a city skyline of grey office blocks. This time the music is upbeat — the best piece on the whole game in my opinion.

The third and final backdrop is a Disney style castle — very much like the one in the real Bomberman game. One of the slightly disappointing

Bombos.

After only an hour on the fine game I had been right through all three backdrops and was onto my second run on the Arabian fortress.

On the plus side Bombo is £2 cheaper and has much better music than Bombyak.

**Start here — the desert fortress**



## Shades of Bombyak — the Disney-style castle.

parts of Bombo is that there are only three different backdrops. After conquering the castle I was disappointed to find that you go straight back to the Arabian fortress again — though it is a tougher layout.

Comparisons with the official version of Bombyak are inevitably going to be made so I will put mine in row — I prefer the Elite offering. It's that little bit tougher than

Generally I am a fan of both of these games. They have that one thing that I find irresistible in any 64 game — power pals. There is just something really exciting about those few seconds when you can charge around the screen gobbling bonuses without a nasty in sight. I swear it was this that made Pac Man the success that it was.

So the choice is yours. Bombo offers better frills at only £2 less — but Bombyak is the official version of that's what you want, and it is a slightly more playable game as well.

Eugene Lecay

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 10

**7**  
Overall

## COMMODORE 64/128 CREATIVE SPARKS

**Price:**  
**£1.99/cass**

More and more software houses are bringing out their own budget labels, the latest in line is Creative Sparks with their Sparklers label. They've done it in the Americana mould and brought out old games but at a cheaper price. This game in particular though, hasn't been previously released.

You become a hero who is known around town as the White Viper because of the large white snake on your family's coat of arms. While you were out walking one day you saw an evil spirit come along and snatch your beautiful wife away. So being the gallant knight you are, it's all to get your armoured only to find that it has been taken.

There are two parts to successfully completing the game. The first of which is probably the easiest I have ever encountered. You are in the forest with the princess and you must stop the evil spirits from getting her and your armour, by chopping them up with your sword. You gain an extra life for every spirit killed. But seven lives is the maximum you can get.

The next thing you must do is capture a tiny steed so you can set off in pursuit of your true love. This is done by lancing him in with

bits of the perimeter fence — but watch out, let every so often out comes an evil spirit and it's bye-bye to your lance. Be careful because every bit of lance is precious if you're hoping to catch that steed. This isn't too tricky but can start to get tedious after a while.

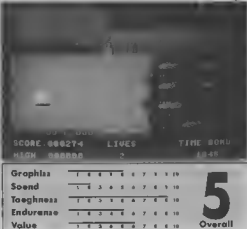
The next section though had me completely flummoxed. How you are actually meant to complete this is beyond me. You have now mounted your horse and must jump across the lake from island to island collecting bits of armour. How far you jump depends on how long you keep the fire button depressed, and as if that wasn't hard enough there is a nice little swamp fairy who is more than willing to send you back to scratch.

The last two parts of the game are feeding time and the rescue but I could not manage to get up to these and I doubt if you will either.

White Viper is nothing special and has nothing that makes it especially interesting. In all fairness I can't see any reason for anyone to buy it other than the price.

Fairly Hammen

**The lone horseman prepares to cross the swamp in White Viper**



# BIGGLES

**COMMODORE  
64/128  
MIRRORSOFT**

**Price:  
£9.95/cass**

Biggles is here. What do you mean, boo? So you've already seen the film. Well, maybe the game will be a little better.

Anyway, here's the story. Biggles is sitting peacefully at home (probably reading *Commodore User*) when - kappow - he is transported to 1917 where he's sitting in a two

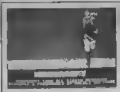
**Chunky, blocky  
graphics don't do  
Biggles any favours.**

seater bi-plane with Jim. By the way, Jim is Biggles' 'tome twan' who's also been transported.

Between them, they must fly across enemy territory to locate and photograph 'the weapon'. Obviously they're constantly under attack from enemy field guns and menacing, mean and merciless Captain Esch von Stralheim (boo, hiss). Our heroes have only two bombs to begin with but can get more by hitting enemy weapon dumps.

If the plane is shot down (which it frequently is) Biggles and Jim are transported to 86 where they must climb and jump across London rooftops patrolled by SAS guards. You control either one or the other player, changing control from one to another to avoid the guards. There are also a few snipers lining at you from windows. Luckily they don't fire straight ahead, only at angles. One in and they're back to 1917 on a First World War battlefield.

Here Jim or Biggles (I can't tell which) must battle his way past the enemy to find the 'weapon' test site. This section reminds me a little of Rambo or Commando - one man's efforts against a whole army. The



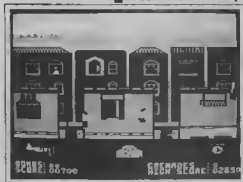
screen is split in two showing the ground itself as well as the underground caves and trenches. You climb down ladders into the trenches to collect grenades for lobbing at the enemy pill-boxes.

Again, if you're hit you're back to the bi-plane - and so it goes on. I think sections appear randomly but you must complete them in order, bi-plane, London rooftops and then the battlefield. The latter two can't be completed until you've finished the first.

Below the actions screen are three symbols - a plane, a bag and a helicopter - corresponding to the three sections. Each gradually disappears when Biggles is in danger. The game ends when one of these symbols is completely gone.

One bonus is that side two of the tape contains a helicopter simulator.

**The Commodore style  
action, Do Elite  
know about this?**



# CAVERNS OF ERIBAN

**COMMODORE  
64/128  
FIREBIRD  
(SILVER RANGE)**

**Price:  
£1.99/cass**

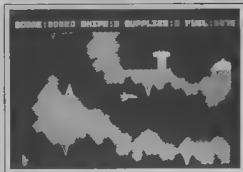
Fielded are obviously not to encroach on Masterblaze's outright superiority in the cheap software market. If *Caverns Of Eriban* is indicative of what's to come they stand every chance of being successful.

As the pilot of a mine supply ship your job is to enter the Caverns Of Eriban (somewhere near Slavenburg I think) and deliver the supplies to the mining depots.

In all there are twenty five depots all desperately in need of their week's supply of lamps, drill bits, candles, shredded wheat, clean socks, shaving foam, blow-up plastic ladies, and all the other things that make life down a mine a little more bearable.

The only problem is that you, weedy little supply ship can only carry enough supplies for five depots at a time. The last job then, is to find all one of the five supply depots on the surface and pick up some stuff. Then it's the long descent into the caverns.

This is very tricky indeed. The major cause of disaster is the plane's (I suppose they mean Slavenburg) ancient defence mechanisms. Moving missiles,



alarms, dipping deadly acid, bouncing ballons, bubbling lava gods and other 'hinges' it's in wall.

If the defence mechanism doesn't get you you'll probably make a pretty good job of destroying yourself.

Your ship has a sort of two speed gearbox. If you push the joystick say, left naturally enough you go left. But hold it there for a second and you go into overdrive. All very well until you need to stop. If you let go you'll come to a rest soon, but not usually soon enough. Turning

round and applying a bit of reverse thrust will do the trick, but it takes a while to get the timing right.

Meanwhile be prepared to spend a lot of time crushing into walls. The caverns have many tight corners and narrow gaps and it takes practice and a few moments of patience to make a worthwhile impact. This

**Tricky stuff  
negotiating the  
Caves of Eriban**





# BIGGLES

In which Biggles is seized by a 1986 helicopter and is transported back to 1917. Here you must locate and destroy the 'secret weapon', picking up spurs, guns and ammunition on the way to help you.

Graphics for both sides of the

game are pretty blocky and not very special, and the music (which plays throughout) is mediocre. But the game itself is fun to play, although the constant switching between sections may annoy some people.

Richard Bradbury

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>6</b> Overall
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	



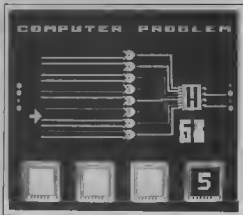
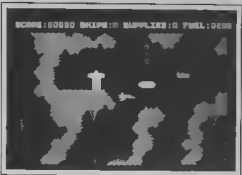
month's super hot tip is find neutral zones where you can take a rest without being blown to bits.

Covers of Eridan is well worth two quid of anyone's money. Incidentally I don't think authors get

nearly enough credit for games, so to put the record straight this month's Caverns was written by Ian Brown and the music (which is very good) by Chris Cox and Ian Gray.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>8</b> Overall
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	



## THE COMET GAME

**COMMODORE 64/128 FIREBIRD**

**Price: £7.95/cass**

One of the more complex sub games in The Comet Game. Anyone seen Mox?

correct connectors - about as exciting as wiring a plug. Antenna alignment: Now read carefully as this game is very complex. Move the joystick left and right to align the antenna with the highest frequency before time runs out.

**Interplanetary Safeguards:** Can you survive a thirty second bout of Missile Command? You probably can but won't want to bother.

**Lia Support Infestation:** Blast the Garm-bags out of the oxygen supply before time runs out. **Celcius Game:**

How do you keep an astronaut who's in suspended animation in good shape? Apparently you tank him up with coffee - brilliant idea! Activate the correct icons to make your astronaut a cup of coffee but keep a good watch on the "P" icon and make sure he doesn't wet himself. Kindergarten jokes at their rock bottom worst! Someone at Firebird is possessed by an extremely flippant streak of total humor.

After all this, I am told that you are put into bio-armor and given the opportunity to shoot all those nasty little lumps of bacteria. But to be honest, it's not worth the bother of going through this rubbish!

Ferdie Hamilton

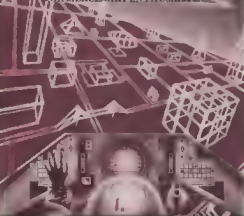
Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>3</b> Overall
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

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# SHARK

## C16 and Plus/4 FIREBIRD (SILVER RANGE)

**Price:**  
**£1.99/cass**

Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water. Well, I had to say it somewhere, might as well get it out of the way now.

I can't make up my mind about *Shark*. When I first set eyes on it I thought oh, gosh, not another duffer from Firebird. When I'd played it for a while though, it went up on my so slightly in my estimation.

You are the intrepid diver, out to rid the waters of deadly man eaters. The Great White 9's always a Great White! swims back and forth across the surface while you lurk in the murky depths.

This particular breed of Great White shark, very conveniently (or stupidly) has a target placed half way up its back. One well aimed shot from the trusty harpoon hits the target, and it's goodbye sharky.

There are a few bits of piping lying around the place to provide some cover to the poor animal. All the

same, it's not too difficult at this level and you can usually make it first shot, ensuring a hefty bonus for your remaining air supply. Level two adds more of a challenge to the proceedings. Anaemic looking eels swim up and down, making it even more difficult, or rather, less easy, to get a shot in. Still plenty of air left by the time I managed it though. Level three has you evading a killer goldfish which swims up and down erratically and kills on contact, slightly tricky, not, by any means, impossible.

On the next level you are dive bombed by something that could either be a squid, or a jellyfish.

Wait a second, here are the jellyfish on level five. You can tell the difference because squid, jellyfish and eels, get the picture? It's

**The shark very obligingly wears a target on its side.**

seafood salad time.

Maybe I expect too much from cheapo games. But the gap between this and some of the more expensive stuff is far wider than you find on, say, Commodore 64 games.

If you're fairly new to gaming *Shark* will undoubtedly give you a few hours cheap entertainment. Firebird will have to do better than this, though, if they're going to match companies like Mestarivore.

Ken McMahon



Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**3**  
Overall

# RUNNER

## C16 and Plus/4 FIREBIRD (SILVER RANGE)

**Price:**  
**£1.99/cass**

**Risk terminal boredom by collecting the keys at the top of the screen.**

If you find yourself in the unfortunate position of having to actually consider this, take a look at the screen shots on the cassette pack. No one can accuse Firebird of being misleading, it's all there. Sparse screens with boring looking yellow platforms connected by ladders, my my, how original! And there in the centre of this minimalist landscape, our hero.

At the top of the screen there are three keys and three vents. The vents occasionally chuck out a boulder in a 'rattling pot' - not that I could spot the difference. The pots, or boulders whizz down the platforms and you lose a life should one hit you. You must make your way to the top of the screen and collect the three keys, before losing all your lives to the cascading boulders.

To help you in this moderately difficult task you have the faithful old joystick. A burst on the joystick button sends you a gridy centimetre into the air. You have limited fuel so it's a good idea not to get carried away with your new toy.



When you've collected all three keys, you get a bonus and a crack at the next screen - wow. There are three basic problems with the game. First, it's too simple, second the graphics are boring. Third, there's not a single original thing about it.

It's hard to imagine how a £2 game could be so poor as to be not worth the money, but this kind of thing only depresses me. Kevin Moughtin, the author obviously has the programming skills to produce

something reasonably good, but *Runner* has about as much originality as a Gérard Marnay joke, and is as much fun.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**2**  
Overall

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James Cook can be seen from the  the service  16 and VIC-17 are not being listed as they are

# DIRTY DEN

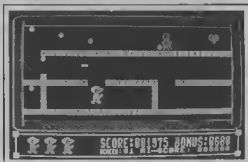
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**Price:  
6.95/cass**

Eastenders has taken the country's TV screens by storm since it began last year, and with characters like Denis Watts, the conning landlord it's no wonder. He's in so many different places that it's no wonder

your way through some twenty or more screens of hectic platforms propelled by a variety of obstacles until you reach the room where your last is being held

En route you'll have to collect the



he should turn up in a computer game

Actually *Dirty Den* just happens to have the same name as this very popular character. In this case, though, our Dennis is the complete antithesis of his TV namesake

He's chivalrous — in fact a real gent. He's in hot pursuit of his loved one captured by a frustrated old wizard. He just has a bit of a body odour problem, o.k.?

The object of the game is to work

dozens of chocolates distributed all round the passageways. These you'll need to give to your greedy pig of a girlfriend when you find her. All



More chocolates and more noisies to avoid as DD progresses through the auras.

Just another platform game — jump to collect the chocolates before reaching the heart, and then next screen.

because the lady loves Mike Tey personally I'd rather have a Bouvenille selection, but I'm spoilt. Graphics are nice and colourful and the game plays quickly, with a fairly rough challenge that would keep you at the keyboard for a while

Mike Pattenden



Graphice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**6**  
Overall

## Dirty Den Competition

We all know that *Dirty Den* the game has nothing to do with *Dirty Den*, the Eastenders dastardly double-dealing landlord Den Watts, which is why we thought we'd have an Eastenders competition.

Fergus McGovern of Probe Software has generously offered to put up thirty copies of the game plus an extra prize of a Seiko UC 1000 computerised watch. All you soap fans have to do is answer a few questions:



- 1) What's the name of Den's pub in Albert Square?
- 2) What's the name of his dog? (the poodle).
- 3) What is the name of Pauline and Arthur's son, now living in Southend?
- 4) What fictional London football team does Arthur support?

And now the tie breaker, the one we love to set you. Right, we're going to ask you to be a bit nasty

here. Characters are always getting killed off in soap operas. So far everyone in Eastenders has escaped the grim reaper. So we want you to tell us which character you would most like to see get

the chop and why.

All answers to be in by July 15, 1986. The judge's (i.e. my) decision is absolutely final and nobody who has any dealings with the megacenter, so there, Ken.

### Answers

- 1) .....
- 2) .....
- 3) .....
- 4) .....

Tie Breaker I would most like to see.....

written out, because.....

(twenty words max)

Name.....

Address.....

Send to: Dirty Den Competition, Commodore User,  
30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AV

# FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING

## COMMODORE C16 and Plus/4 ELITE

**Price:**  
**£7.95/cass**

*Frank Bruno's Boxing* takes its inspiration from *Super Puncher* — the coin-op boxing game that was popular in the arcades and converted to the 64 last Summer. Now it's your turn.

In the game Frank takes on three different opponents with hilarious sounding names. There's the lumbering Canadian Crusher, Fling Long Chop the crafty ornamental, and the toughest opponent of all — the big, bald Russian — Andapancherov.

Each opponent has his own unique style. Fling Long, for example has a tendency to think he's appearing in a copy of *Way of the Exploding Fist* rather than a boxing game —

leaving Kong Fu kicks at you as he comes off the ropes.

He's also the quickest boxer Frank has to face — putting together several machine gun combinations punches that can leave the European champion reeling or worse still — out for the count.

The game is about the first I've come across that puts the action pads on my joystick to good use. You control Frank by using the

stick and keys 1 and 2 — the stick to faint Frank, right and left, and the 1 and 2 keys to control his lists. It really does work well — I can't think why it's never been done before.

The Canadian Crusher is your first opponent — and no easy one either. He's got a hell of a punch on him. A real knockout merchant though not

**Canadian Crusher —  
knack him down and  
he's back with a  
vengeance.**



particularly mobile which enables you to avoid a lot of what he throws at you in his slow, awkward fashion.

In terms of weight the Crusher is your largest opponent, at 16st, eight heavy heavyweight in a legend.

If you can give him the KO treatment your next opponent will be Fling Long Chop the Chinaman. He's a sight more good looking than the Crusher in his neat white karate pants and black belt.

Graphics are of a high standard. Good use of colour, and detail in the boxers faces and clothing.

The final opponent for example, the Russian Andapancherov has a neat grey moustache with white shorts and boots. He's completely bald and likes to lean his head elegantly — butting out Frank when ever he gets the chance.

The Russian is the toughest of Frank's opponents and the one he faces last of all. He's very mobile. Fainting and dodging to avoid Frank's punches.

The screen display shows a portrait of Frank in the top right corner of the screen with his current opponent in the left. Again, the

# JET SET WILLY

## COMMODORE C16 and Plus/4 TYNESOFT

**Price:**  
**£7.95/cass**

*Jet Set Willy*, the game is as C16 and Plus/4 owners have been waiting for, with excitement and anticipation. Will such a complex game like this fit into a much smaller machine? The answer is simply NO. Will certainly not the way Tynesoft have attempted to do it.

You play the role of Manic Miner who has now become rich and famous. Joined the Dynasty set, so to speak, Champagne coming out of his ears etc. And like all Jet Setters, throws a party in his cliff top mansion.

Before he can get to his room, his men Manic must collect all the empty glasses placed in various rooms of the mansion. It sounds pretty easy and uncomplicated, but like all good mansions, there are

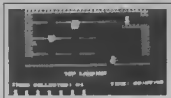
endless rooms each with their own little nasty.

During the conversion of this 64 classic, some drastic measures have been taken to squeeze the game into 16K memory. For a start this sound is even worse than its predecessor *Manic Miner*. There is only one sound throughout the entire game, and that is when you collect an item.

I do wish programmers would be a little more inventive in this direction. Even when you die all you get is a quick flash of the border, a very poor attempt to catch your attention. An unworthy effort by Tynesoft given the C16 and Plus/4 sound capabilities.

Another major disappointment about this game is the actual playability. Movement is so bad I ended up playing the game on the keyboard. For some strange reason Tynesoft have scrapped the idea of having 'lim' to jump and apted for 'up' to jump. Consequently when you want to run and jump you have to wrench the joystick into the top diagonals, making the game that much harder to play.

Also when *Manic Miner* moves there



**Manic Miner becomes  
a little orthritic with  
his move to the C16.**

are occasional double images and characters overlapping, plus there are lots of bugs in the programming of the game. This resulted in my absolute confusion as to what is supposed to be happening. Sometimes when you lose one of your eight lives the game ends, and when you pass onto some screens it takes you right back to the beginning. This game is far too frustrating and expensive to make it worth playing.

A big disappointment to me, I was so looking forward to the release of *Jet Set Willy*, and hoped it would be as exciting to play as *Manic Miner*. The sad thing is that with a bit more time and effort spent, this game could have been as much a success as the original, the potential is all there, it has just been wasted.

My advice is steer clear of this one, it is a lot of money to pay for disappointment.

**James Pickering**

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**4**  
Overall

graphics here impress. Not quite up to the standard of some of the digitized portraits that are beginning to appear on some new 64 games but certainly better than anything else I've seen on the C16.

The size of the figures is also worth remarking on. They are nice

and big so you can see what's going on — pretty essential to any beat 'em up game.

The main part of the screen is the ringish view itself. A slightly disappointing aspect of the game is that only a fraction of the ring is used. Brno and his opponents face each other square on only leaning to the right and left for the duration of the round.

Above the ring are several other game displays. The digital clock

counting down the three minutes of each round. Each bout only lasts for one round.

Each boxer's current strength is displayed by a constantly changing barometer. When Frank successfully punnels his opponents their strength barometer will shrink to nothing allowing him to go in for the knock out punch.

Depending on his own strength at the time his opponent may or may not stay down for the count of ten. If not it's who scores most points, also recorded for you at the top of the screen, that is the winner.

When you get a sufficiently high victory over your opponent the computer will give you a secret code that you can use to load the next boxer. There are three separate loads in the game.

The game has been programmed to a high standard by Binks trilogy

programmer — Jon Williams. It's a lesser one of all those C16 programmers out there who keep delivering poorly constructed platform games, but I can't help feeling it is a little repetitive.

It would have been improved if Elton had crammed a few more opponents in there for a bit of variety. The 64 version had six — it ought to have been possible to get a couple more loads of at least on two sides of tape.

The sound was also less than spectacular. All you really get are the bleeps for the count and some rather muffled noises as the punches are thrown.

Still, if you ever get to play *Super Puncher* in the arcades and you liked it, then this is the nearest thing to it you are ever likely to find for your C16 and Plus4.

Engene Lacoy

**Filing Long Chop waits for his post-flight Harry Carpenter interview.**



Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**7**  
Overall

## RETURN OF THE SPACE WARRIOR

**COMMODORE  
64/128  
ALPHA-OMEGA-  
SOFTWARE**

**Price:  
£1.99/cass**

The space warrior looks suspiciously like an egg on a surfboard

It had to be a nightmare, begins the blurb. It was, there were no instructions and it took me at least half an hour to work out the basics.

*Return of the Space Warrior* (you never do get to find out where he's been) is a pretty weird game, once you find out how it actually works.

The intro screen tells you the number of players — one, the skill level — one, and that you are playing with the keyboard. The only problem is there doesn't seem to be any easy way to alter these settings. There surely exists a two player option, higher skill levels and a joystick option, how you get them is anybody's guess.

There is, however, one clue provided at this stage — Press A to start. Having done this you are presented with the screen, half a dozen little platforms. The next ten minutes are spent trying every combination of keys on the 64's keyboard. Before long, you will discover that the only keys required are A — to propel you into the air, L to go left and one of the square brackets to go right.

Accompanied by some great sound,

your craft emerges on one of the platforms. Your ship is of an advanced design type known as an ovalosphere. To the inexperienced layman, it looks very much like an egg on a surfboard, but as, in fact, a very sophisticated piece of machinery. Before you know where you are, enemy ovalospheres are turning up all over the place. This is where the extremely advanced weaponry of the 21st Century comes in handy (it doesn't actually say the game is set in the 21st Century, but judging by the advanced technology on show it must be). Expertly manipulating your gravity smash you must dispose of the enemy ovalospheres.

In practice, this involves manipulating your craft above the enemy and then smacking into it. As

luck would have it, more often than not you end up below them just prior to impact and you are the one to lose out.

That's about it really. When you destroy the ovalospheres they turn into what I can only describe as squish blobs, which you must pick up for bonus points, before they turn back into surfing eggs. When a screen is cleared it's on to the next wave.

Like I said, a weird game. *Space Warrior* has some nice ideas, but I get the impression maybe it's a rushed, super low budget job. Apart from the Montystrange sound effects, there's nothing spectacular about it. A good idea but down a little bit by the presentation.

Kenn McMahon

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**3**  
Overall

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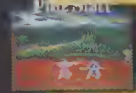
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## WINNER

**Competition Winners**



**Berks Competition Winners**

We're all slumped back in our chairs suffering from nervous exhaustion, having picked the Berks compo winners from our mega-mailbag.

First prize of a Tommy Verhot goes to Paul Welch from Exeter who brought us out of our coma with "When a robot you've never met before suddenly grabs you by the throat — that's IMPULSE". Alas, only 22 other attempts made us even think about laughing — copies of the Berks came to you all:

Christopher Grace of Burton-on-Trent; S. Reeves of Birmingham; John Paul Abern of County Down; Andrew Gould of Essex; Paul Housier of Birmingham; Colin Keilly of Co. Westmeath; Patrick Kennelly of Haris; John Glibbert of Kent; Royce Palmer of Canterbury; Mark Shales of Jarrow; Christopher of Surrey; C. Brehaut of Hants; and M. Bartlett of

...are all slumped back in our chairs...  
...compo winners from our mega-mailbag.  
First prize of a Tommy Verbot goes to Paul Welch from ... copies of the Berks game.  
...When a robot you've never met before suddenly grabs you ...  
...only 22 other attempts made us even think about laughing ...

Nicholas Klee of Kent, Christopher Grace of Burton-on-Trent, S. Reeves of Birmingham; John Paul Abern of County Cork; Andrew Swallow of Sheffield, Andrew Gould of Essex, Paul Heuser of Birmingham, Colin Kenley of Kent, Westford; Andrew Scott of Manchester; Steve Fletcher of Manchester; Patrick Kennedy of Haris, John Gubbey of Kent, Ray Saleh of Salford; Nicholas Smith of Derby, Robert Lucas of Surrey, C. Palmer of Canterbury, Mark Schulz of Jarrow; Gavin Sun of Preston; Saboor Abdul of Cleveland; T. Peters of Pinner; S. Brehaut of Hants, and M. Bartlett of Penlypool.

**Final Results** ... was, unsurprisingly, enormous. Clearly the idea of ... to you as much as it did to us. The problem ... back for many of you. The correct an ... 1) and 3) Konami's first ...

[illegible]

I've been to our Great Britain and Ireland  
 having an arcade machine you can be a  
 that the questions we set proved to be a  
 1) Konami has no meaning 2) World Series Baseball  
 are 1) Konami has no meaning 2) World Series Baseball  
 please see the Block Game.  
 I thought you'd better sit down Paul Miller of Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, you've won a  
 machine was Bouncer and we agreed it was perfect.

There were thirty runners-up, so screw your eyes up and check to see if you've won a copy of the 64 conversion:  
 Matthew Clayton, Otley, N Yorks; Ian Abbot, Dunstable, Beds; Russell Hyggs, Chesham, Bucks; Perry Stevenson,  
 Bourne, Lincs; David White, Croxall, Surrey; Lee Shipley, Huyton, Liverpool; Stephen Jenkins, Ayr, Ayrshire;  
 Dyfed, Karl Goss, Highfield, Wigan; Andrew Waterhouse, Letcham, Essex; Tim Barker, Abingdon, Oxon; Jason Paller, Bury St  
 Stephens, Herts; Tony Clough, Grinstead, Sussex; John Dwyall, St Garmouth, Norfolk; Matthew Clayton, Otley, N  
 Edwards, Suffolk; Andrew Lane, Marple, Cheshire; David Watt, Polewath, Glamorgan; Glenn White, Woking, Surrey; Jamie Woodcut,  
 Yorks; Russell Baker, London; Michael O'Donnell, Blackrock, Eire; Gavin Douglas, Sander, Ripon, N Yorks; Rowell Gill, Morf, Essex;  
 Tyne, Ian Falan, Stepney, London; David O'Donnell, Blackrock, Eire; Gavin Douglas, Sander, Ripon, N Yorks; Rowell Gill, Morf, Essex;  
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# COMMODORE 64 CHART

## CHART CHAT

The major shock in the charts this month is the position of Thrust. Our ex Cheapo of the Month is sitting proudly on top of the rest. This suggests that the gameplay and addictiveness of full price games is just not up to standard. Well done Firebird. Elsewhere *International Karate* is doing well, proving that you don't have to be original or even on time to do well in this business. Otherwise it's business as usual with *Uridium* the biggest seller so far this year being toppled and *Spindizzy* makes a strong challenge for the number one slot. The only thing that can stop it reaching the top is the big arcade challenge of *Green Beret* and *Ghosts and Goblins*. Over on the C16 chart it's Mastertronic all the way as budget games hold sway. Is the quality of games so poor here that no-one's willing to shell out more than a few quid?

NEW	Thrust	Firebird
NEW	International Karate	System 3
NEW	Spindizzy	Electric Dreams
NEW	PS1-5 Trading Company	U.S. Gold
NEW	Spellbound	Mastertronic
NEW	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
7	Bombjack	Elite
NEW	They Sold (2)	Hit Squad
9	Uridium	Hewson Consultants
NEW	Off the Hook	Off the Hook
11	Kane	Mastertronic
12	V	Ocean
NEW	World Cup Carnival	U.S. Gold
14	Superbowl	Ocean
NEW	Wing Commander	Mastertronic
NEW	Golf Construction Set	Ariolasoft
17	Hardball	U.S. Gold
18	Zapp Sizzlers	Gremlin Graphics
NEW	Biggles	Mirrorsoft
NEW	Countdown to Meltdown	Mastertronic

## GENERAL

## C16

CALLUP

NEW	Thrust	Firebird
NEW	Batman	Ocean
3	Commando	Elite
4	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
NEW	Spindizzy	Electric Dreams
NEW	Kik Start	Mastertronic
7	Bombjack	Elite
NEW	They Sold (2)	Hit Squad
8	International Karate	System 3
10	Spellbound	Mastertronic

NEW	Kik Start	Mastertronic
2	Mr. Puniverse	Mastertronic
8	Bandits at Zero	Mastertronic
NEW	Hektik	Mastertronic
NEW	Return of Rockman	Mastertronic
6	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
7	Big Mac	Mastertronic
8	Rockman	Mastertronic
9	BMX Racers	Mastertronic
10	Commando	Elite



# The Games

We'll lay money that you own at least one of his games and that'll you'll probably buy another fairly soon. He owns a quarter of the European games market, drives a Ferrari and buys Italian clothes. Who is he? Eugene Lacey swallowed his pride and drove his works Cavalier up to Birmingham to meet him and find out more about the Games Man ...

Through his own company U.S. Gold and through deals with several other software houses around the world Geoff Brown has sold over 2 million computer games in the three years his company has been running and confidently expects to sell over another million this year.

Just a little investigation reveals that *Demon*, *Ultimate*, *English Software*, *Adventure International*, *Gremlin Graphics*, *Microprose*, *Epyx*, *Access*, *On-Line*, *S&S*, *Accolade*, *Sierra* and *Sydney Development* are all — in one way or another linked with U.S. Gold.

Add to these interests a brand new budget label called *Americana*, Ensign's biggest distributor of computer games — *Centrafit*, and you can begin to understand how the Games Man can drive around in one of only 20 Ferrari Testarossas in the U.K.

As soon as Geoff Brown opens his mouth you can understand why the phrase "nice guy" keeps coming up whenever you talk to anyone who knows him. It's his voice — with a slight touch of Brummie, but soft — like a spot of laid back Adrian Mole. The clothes are pretty good too. Designer casuals. The T-shirt really a hard-wearing businessman's look.

But his impression does not last

when you take in the atmosphere of his office.

You can almost hear the cash tills ringing at U.S. Gold's modest HQ in a modern industrial estate, a five minute taxi ride from Brum's Bull Ring.

The rooms above the warehouse are crammed with people. Disks practically on top of each other. It's all very business like in the place with phones ringing, memos being fetched and carried, and business people coming and going and shaking hands as they disappear in and out of doors.

The brand new Ferrari sets outside the offices in clear view of the receptionist with the financial controller's Porsche lurking in company.

Of course flash cars are nothing new to the software industry. The last couple of Personal Computer World Shows would have looked more like the Expensive Cars of The Year Show if you happened to wander, by accident, into this car park next door to the event.

What makes Geoff Brown's car different is that he forked out the sixty two grand to buy his — rather than renting it, like most of the other games business tycoons seeking to boost their image.

So is the Games Man a millionaire? "No ... the strict definition is that

you have to have a million pounds in your bank. I don't have a million in the bank but if you were to add up the value of my companies I suppose you could say that I was a millionaire".

Either way you look at it it's not bad going for a former maths teacher, and failed rock musician who started his company with a £200 loan from Nat West.

## Music Man

Geoff Brown is one of those rich people who would have you believe that their new found wealth has not changed them one bit.

"When I was a musician I was living on the breadline but I was perfectly happy. Like so many bands we were always on the verge of just making it."

Geoff played keyboards for a group called *Muscles*, which owed more to the emerging electronic bands of the late seventies than the heavy metal of its name implies.

Brown was in good company in *Muscles* for another member of the band has recently equalled his personal wealth — now the drummer for *Simple Minds* — Jim Geymour.

After trying to make it in the music biz and failing, Geoff Brown decided to try something new and bought himself

a computer. "An Atari 800 I've just finished paying for it".  
"In the end I decided that I would rather be a never was, than a has been".

The decision to give up music and try something else was a tough one and one that he has still not given up on entirely.

"One of my ambitions is to have a number one record".

"I've had several hits with one games — had one time U.S. Gold gets one it still gives me a thrill — but having had several number 1's in the games charts, it would be really nice to do it in the pop charts too".

"I'm a bit too old to do it myself now, though", he admits gamely, considering his trendy appearance.

"What I'd like to do is compose something for a new band, select the musicians and publish the record myself. So I could still feel part of it".

This is no idle wish either. Brown has converted a room in his house into a studio and staged up his 64 with a Midt Interface and all the latest musical add-ons.

The tape to tapes attitudes of the

like *Winter Games*. That would never have been written in the U.K. *Winter Games* has several leads. It relies on being able to read much more data off the disk in different times for different parts of the game. When the program has to be entirely resident in the 64, the cassette-based games do then the designer has to work within that set limit of memory".

The limitations of cassette based software are something Brown knows well because the first question he has to address when reporting a new game is: will it work on cassette? Some do and some don't and some don't even get attempted.

For this reason he is not impressed by the wave of euphoria sweeping U.K. games houses that this is the year they take the States. "Tell me one U.K. game that has made it to number one in the States", Brown asks accusingly. Though the success of *Elite* in doing just that subsequent to this interview may force him to reconsider his judgment.

## What's coming

But if licensing hot American games

They stole the number one spot in the charts in March with *Kung Fu Master* — one of the top selling games of '86. One thing you won't see from U.S. Gold in the near future are Amiga and Atari ST games.

Brown is less than optimistic about these machines' chances of success. "The Amiga has failed and the ST is hardly setting the world alight".

## Getting bigger all the time

The planned expansion of U.S. Gold in '88 will necessitate a move to bigger premises — a large office block near the awful Bull Ring.

Before the planned expansion U.S. Gold already controlled 25% of the European games market. That's deemed a monopoly situation in business terms.

Does Geoff Brown think this is in the games players' interest? "I've published before and played every one of them before we made the decision to go ahead. Basically I think I know a good game when I see one".

It would be difficult to argue with

that but it is still possible for the home programmer to make some money out of a game of his or his own, and what would convince Geoff to publish it?

"I would want to get a lining for the game and for the person I would want to feel confident that the programmer understood why anyone would want to play the game. Does he or she have an idea picture about how it could work?" I would also look for an idea or two about how it should be advertised and promoted. . .

Outside of programming rewards does the Games Mar have any general advice on how Commodore User readers can become millionaires and drive around in shiny new Ferraris?

"Just be prepared to work" . . . "I am in the office at night 9 o'clock, six days a week and I rarely leave before eight in the evening."

But when do you get to drive the Ferrari? "At weekends mostly, though I did take it up to 180mph in France recently".

No, the poem didn't catch him — even though a helicopter was scrambled to give chase. But that's Games Mar for you — one step ahead. □

# Man

music business have not entirely faded into Geoff Brown's past.

"When I was writing songs for Muscles I used to stare at the keyboard and think somewhere in there is a million pounds. It was the same when I got the Atari. I knew it had the power to make a lot of money".

## How it all began

Brown talks affectionately about his Atari and well he might for it was the foundation stone of his business.

He moved quickly to sign up exclusive importations with several leading American games producers who — in pre 64 days — put most of their efforts into Atari games. At that time the U.K. software houses were concentrating on the Spectrum and Vic.

Then 64 explosion changed everything. The American game makers switched to Commodore games as a priority and Brown was perfectly placed to emerge as the number one U.K. source of 64 games.

It was to be a long time before the home producers of 64 games could match the quality of the American software, and Brown believes they still haven't matched it. "Take something

and flog it through across a range of European systems was the norm of the game for the last couple of years then that is definitely not the case for the rest of '86 and beyond".

U.S. Gold have now gone one better. They have commissioned some of the top American games writers to work on titles that will see the light of day in Europe last.

One such programme is *Clint Gray* — famous for *Shoulderdash*. He is just putting the finishing touches to *Leiftrator* — a multi challenge action game. Catch the full story on this one in next month's CU.

Probably the biggest launch of the year from the U.S. Gold stable will be *Quantum* — the four player arcade adventure that is currently gobbling ten pence pieces faster than any other arcade game in the country.

It's not surprising this one is doing so well. The Atari conversion enables four players to play together simultaneously, against each other, with four separate joysticks on the cabinet.

Shoot 'em up fans are also included in the planning with the licensing of *Xenious* — another Atari conversion — a shoot 'em up that promises to make *Uridom* look like *Space Invaders*.

U.S. Gold have already woken up to the renewal of the coin-op conversion



**TASMAN**  
SOFTWARE

**A WORDPROCESSOR PROGRAM THAT'S AS GOOD AS YOUR 64.**

2





# INTO THE VALLEY



by Keith  
Campbell

## THE PRICE OF MAGIK

Level 9  
GRA

CBM 64/128  
Price: £9.95/cass

Marble madness?



These plants are  
useful for magical  
protection.

Those hanging  
tentacles can be  
deadly.



Stone Henge, and  
not a hippy in  
sight.

Level 9 have done it again. But this time they always do! Not only have they produced another superb adventure, they have incorporated all the new goodness that are beginning to appear in adventures, plus more besides!

*Price of Magik* is the sequel to *Red Moon*, and shows off the Austins' latest and greatest parser. With a thousand word vocabulary behind it, there's all the features you might find

on as labocom game — and on cassette! Multiple commands, **GET ALL**, **EXAMINE ALL BUT**, and **IT**, are all supported, as well as conversation with characters in the game

Magically bring the  
pictures to life and  
see what happens.

This is the wood  
shed. Search it  
carefully and watch  
out for the nasty.



The library stuffed  
full of books on  
how to cook  
Habbitt's.

The vines — this is  
the route to the  
roof.



Open the wrong  
one for a nasty  
surprise.

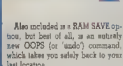
Magik pictures  
location.



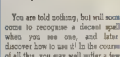
Get that bat.



Where are you  
now?



Waken the board  
game to learn a  
new spell.



Also included is a RAM SAVE option, but best of all, is an utterly new OOPS (or 'undo') command, which takes you safely back to your last location.

Your task is to displace Myggar, before he sucks all the power from the magic crystal of which he is Guardian Fall, and very soon there will be no magik left in the world.

Naturally, to get the better of so learned a magician, you'll need to use a bit of magik yourself. Unless you happen to know some, you'll have to learn — and fast.

You are told nothing, but will soon come to recognise a decent spell when you see one, and later discover how to use it! In the course of all this, you may well suffer a few blows to your sanity, but don't worry — the less sane you are, the better a magician you become!

Magik alone will not see you through though, you'll also need to break up on your lightning techniques. There are ghouls and ghouls, and all sorts of other very nasty creatures lurking in the house of the Red Moon. Some attack you as

The Hall of Statues  
— one of hundreds  
of pretty pictures in  
the *Price of Magik*.

Hang 'em high.



night. Others simply refuse to let you pass by. Combat is carried out in text mode, and reports on your strategic points are displayed regularly whilst you're fighting.

As well as magic and combat, there are, of course, plenty of puzzles! And here I found the new features incorporated in the game make it very slick to play. Confronted by a collection of chests, it soon became apparent that danger was lurking inside many of them. By a combination of RAM SAVING and OOPSes, all the tedious of tape saving and loading was removed, allowing the situation to be sorted out rapidly and methodically.

Hitherto, Level 9 adventures have been identical on every one of the wide range of machines for which the games are produced. In order to make full use of the increasing memory of the average computer, slightly cut down text and reduced extras, are provided on smaller machines. But the 64 is up there near the top of the list only marginally smaller than the MSX.

This is the first Level 9 product to be provided with the expensive Laserlok protection system.

Price of Magic is the second adventure to be produced at 'Level 9 West', the home of Pete, Nick and Mike Austin. Set on a hillside overlooking a peaceful valley it's obviously proving an ideal retreat in which to create their special brand of magic. There are also views of Weston Super Mare, '... home town of comedians John Cleese and Jeffrey Archer...' says the wily.

Anyway, as with all Level 9 games, one can only say, 'Their best yet!'

Graphics ★★  
Playability ★★★★★  
Puzzleability ★★★★★  
Overall ★★★★★



## THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE

CRL/St. Bride's  
Gra  
CBM 64  
Price: £7.95/cass

The Very Big Cave Adventure claims to be the original Original Adventure which was subsequently cleaned up to become the Crowther and Wood Original Adventure - Colossal Cave. Your guided tour through this unexpected labyrinth, as conducted by no less an authority on dark elvish and tight spaces than Truxa Tunnan, prefect at St. Bride's School.

So you thought the little brick house in the forest was a well house, source of the stream along whose banks lay hidden a locked grating? You got it wrong! Had you looked closely at the door while playing one



Once inside, do your business and look for something useful. (In the loo? Ed.)

of the many derivatives of Colossal Cave, you would have noticed a little brass coin-operated mechanism, bearing the legend VACANT.

The brick well-house contains familiar objects, and a few surprises, including a dry spring, and a pair of wellies. Off down the stream, underground, and along a wall-



You'll need to find a coin to get in.

Oh no, it's engaged, and you're dying to go.

known crawl westwards - did you remember the lamp? It is dark, and without it you might fall down a glowing hole. Here, the walls are made of fissures orange sorbet, and the resident recognition-seeking scowled will be awaiting you. A canny bird, he will surely recognise an old hand, by the lack of a black rod in his inventory. After all, an adventurer is an adventurer's boarder, and will gladly pick up everything in sight, until he can carry no more.

Along this stretch of cave, beware a granger-headed spidly creature wearing a beard and gloves - he may well throw something deadly at you! Further along the tunnel has become a pitfall - but how will you persuade it to join that great flying circus in the sky?

The puzzles all have a new and satirical twist, cleverly built into the very reasonable framework of Colossal Cave. To appreciate the humour to the full, you'll have to have previously played Colossal in one form or another. If you haven't I'd say that it's worth buying it to play, before attempting this. However, you'll still get plenty of laughs even if you haven't played Colossal Cave. There is the Tees Room and Rabbit Room, for example, that are amusing in their own right. There is a Rude Room, too, with a VERY rude word written on the wall.

Very Big is Quilled, Patched, and Illustrated, but it doesn't play like it. It has some screen and sound effect surprises, a very fast to display, and reads well. It comes in two parts, and although a RAM save option is provided, to pass from one part to the next requires a tape save.

Here you will find old problems with a new twist, and new problems with an old twist. This is my choice as the best spoof adventure yet!

Graphics ★★  
Playability ★★★★★  
Puzzleability ★★★★★  
Overall ★★★★★

## NEWS

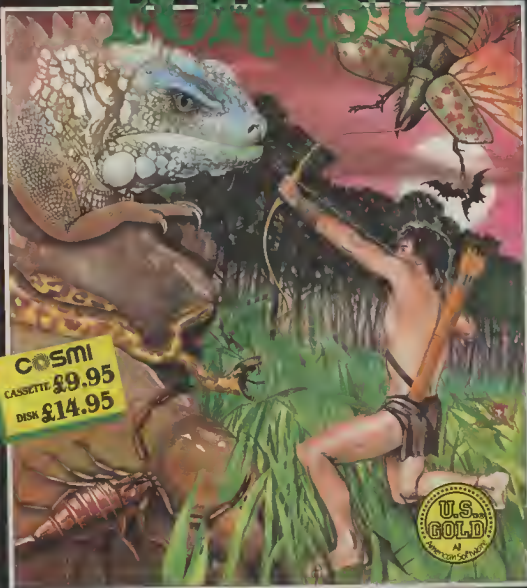
★ Magnetic Scrolle have signed a deal with Rambird Software under which they will release six games over the next few years. The first of these products, scheduled for an Autumn release, is a new adventure entitled *Guild of Thieves*, which is 'even better than *The Pawn*', claims Scrolle's Anita Sinclair.

★ Delta 4 are now back in the business of distributing their own titles. *Bored at the Rings*, and *Robin of Sherlock*, following rumours of problems at Silversoft, involving non-payment of royalties. Meanwhile, Fergus McNeil, brains behind the titles, has signed up a deal to write a

new adventure for the more reliable and well-loved family firm of Level 9. Watch out, too, for Delta 4's *The Baggit*, on release from CRL.

★ Incentive Software have now released a version of their *Graphic Adventure Creator* on the 64, originally available for the Amstrad. This excellent package combines text and graphics utilities all in one program, uses extensive text compression, and has an easy-to-use editing system. It's priced at £22.95 on cassette, £27.95 on disk, and if the 64 version comes up to the Amstrad original, then Quilled games will soon be a thing of the past.

# BEYOND FORBIDDEN FOREST



**COSMI**

CASSETTE £9.95

DISK £14.95



# HELP

## VALLEY HELPLINE

People have been known to go almost insane trying to unravel some of the more devious problems in Adventure games! There's the famous Screening Door and Babel Fish in *Hatch Hater's Guide* — may a head has been turned by these! *Sorcerer of Claymore Castle* has the Fountain of Youth, and (apparently) too many jobs to do with too few spells.

The mud bending puzzles are numerous. There's lavathans, iron statues, knights who say NIT, braceless seen on trums, bio-gems, unmovable wrathbands, and pale bulbous eyes, (not to mention iron grates) all waiting to ensnare the

innocent adventurer. And if these aren't enough to break the mind and spirit, the chances are that leprosy will, before long, strike the hardy adventurers.

We are determined to put an end to this untold misery! Welcome to the *Commodore User Adventure Helpline*, or *Valley Rescue Service*! Here's how it works.

If you are on the verge of despair put pen to paper and let us know where you are stuck. I will rush you a reply, hopefully, containing the remedy to your ills. If the cure is unknown, then your problem will get a mention in these pages, calling on the combined might of Commodore

User readers to help. And a Clues section each month will aim at both prevention and cure, anticipating problems in the latest games, and offering advice to those whose pleas are answered.

I can't promise that we know all the answers, but I do think we have more at our fingertips than any other single source, thanks to the Computer & Video Games Adventure Helpline Database. The C&VG Helpline has been running for over three years, and now the power behind it is being offered to CU readers. The column in CU will be entirely separate, but all the clues you send in, will be added to the

database, providing an even more powerful service to the readers of both magazines.

This month brings you a taster — your first few clues to be going on with!

Oh, and one more thing! Unlike any other Adventure Helpline we know of, the Helpline aims to answer all mail, be it with a clue, a 'thankyou', or a 'sorry'. We reckon we achieve a reply level of over 95%. We will be extending the same reply service to Commodore Users, on attractively designed 'Valley' postcards!

Looking forward to hearing from you!

## CAMPBELL'S COMMENT

Adventures are the classical music of computer games — arcade games are the pop. Arcades sell in large numbers in a short period; they are trendy but tend to become old hat quickly. It is very rare that an adventure game makes it into the charts, but adventures sell steadily over a long period, and have lasting interest for many years.



What, then, of the recent chart success of *Lord of the Rings*? Here is a game, which, like its predecessors *The Hobbit* and *Sherlock*, is riddled with bugs, and crashes on the slightest pretext. *The Hobbit* had an excuse, it was the first of a new genre of adventure, featuring colour graphics and sophisticated text input, designed to run on the first machines that brought larger

memory and colour within the reach of millions.

But too much effort seems to have been put into trying to make the command interface more intelligent, and virtually none in making it more reliable. As a result, it frequently suffers from half-witted replies at best, nervous breakdowns at worst.

Plenty of the correspondence I receive from adventures makes reference to recently found bugs. Do adventure players, in fact, enjoy bugs? Do they take delight in entering obscure commands to try to trip the program up, in order to discover (yet) another bug? Rather like finding another treasure, or inaccessible exit, perhaps? I suspect not. Some, I think, make the best of a bad job, others complain bitterly.

An adventure game is particularly difficult to test exhaustively, due to the multiple paths that are possible through the program. But an adventure software house that consistently produces drastically faulty programs does not deserve the respect, or continued support, of adventure players. It is saying, in effect: "It loads. It can be completed. Other than that, we can't be bothered to test it. £15.00 please."

Because these poor quality programs are backed up by quality games like *Tolkien* and *Conan Doyle*, they are hyped-up and sell

enormously well. They are the first introduction to many, of the adventure game format. The trouble is, that this attitude also affects other, far more conscientious titles. Who can blame people if, once caught,

having played it exhaustively enough to discover the many shortcomings in the program. But I for one will be a lot harder on Part 2. Be warned, Melbourne — get your House in order!

### ●●●●●CLUES●●●●●

**FANTASTIC FOUR:**  
Breaching liquid causes drowning; lack of ventilation causes suffocation. When you have hit bottom, you need to feel, to feel the mud, to make a break!

**VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE:**  
A good round of applause will filter a slighter

**SORCERER OF CLAYMORE CASTLE:**  
There is a cabinet along with all the usual things...

**EUREKA ROMAN:**  
A gift of clothes for a solitary cure.

**REBEL PLANET:**  
You won't have time for the night life, so settle on argument with a bribe!

they decide to stick to arcades in future?

An adventure game takes a considerably longer playing time for review purposes than does an arcade game. I must confess that I, among other reviewers, gave *Lord Of The Rings* a laudatory write up. Perhaps those of us who did are partly to blame for the game's success, not

Address your adventure clues and problems to me at:  
Commodore User  
Priority Court, 30-32  
Farrington Lane  
London EC1R 3AU.  
Mark your envelope with **COMMODORE USER** so that the clue you need gets printed in the appropriate magazine!

# INTO THE VALLEY

## SEABASE DELTA

**Firebird  
GrA  
CBM 64/128  
Price: £1.99/cass.**

For a pocket-money priced game, you could do a lot worse than *Seabase Delta*. This is the sequel to *Subsunk*, featuring your friendly reporter Ed Lutes on yet another underwater mission. You, as Ed, have achieved the objective of *Subsunk*, and sent a distress signal from the stranded submarine, only to have it dragged by a strange magnetic force into *Seabase Delta*.

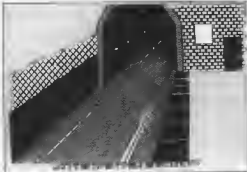
You find yourself in the company of a corpse, and documents near the body reveal a plot to dispatch a nuclear missile at a British base. Your job is to stop it, (and get a hot story back to your Editor, I should think).

Travel is by an underground rail network linking parts of the base, and through observation windows you can see the missile, but cannot yet get to it — most frustrating. Even-

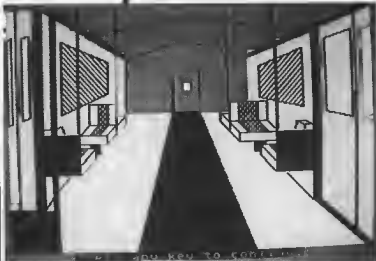
tually, you reach a hatch leading to an airlock. Will you drown yourself in the process of operating it?

There is a whole screen picture for each location, quickly drawn, and displayed only once unless you type **LOOK**. These are far better than the rather comic graphics of the game's forerunner.

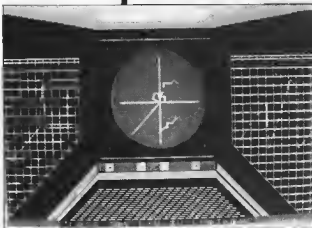
The text is friendly, vocab reasonable, and the response fast, except for some built-in delays. These occur when you **EXAMINE** or **OPEN** something, and a new object is about to be revealed. There's also a delay during tube journeys, which is frustrating, as there are quite a few trips to make, each with the same sequence of commands, for each trip. This slows down play considerably.



▲ You'll see a lot of these stations — travelling around can be very frustrating.



▲ Travel around the underground rail network in this train compartment.



There's a whole-screen picture for each location, which is drawn very quickly.

Still, at £1.99 you can't go wrong — a cheap and cheerful adventure that should please anyone after a light-hearted budget game.

Graphics	★★★
Playability	★★★
Puzzleability	★★★★
Overall	★★★

# INTO THE VALLEY

# MYSTERY VOYAGE ADVENTURE

Colleen Ltd.  
TA  
CBM 64/128  
Price: £9.95/cass.

The storm rages around you, your ship is being tossed about on the boiling sea. Make sure you have the volume turned up, for the captain is about to shout: "Take to the lifeboats! We are about to sink!" This is the first synthesized speech I have come across in an adventure. Slightly it's a gimmick and rather metallic, although I suppose anybody's voice would become a bit squeaky if they were about to become shipwrecked!

The narrative introduction, and the voice synthesis in *Mystery Voyage* sets the scene for your predicament: out of sight of land,

you lie parched and naked under a burning sun, on a raft carried by a threatening black sea.

Paddling the raft by hand, initially you have no idea of which direction to head. But it turns out

there are numerous islands dotted about. The sea is not an 'adventure maze', there is logic and pattern to the layout of the islands.

The best method of approach is to map each island individually, and

make a separate master map of the sea routes, that way your map will be very manageable and easy to follow. You'll probably have to replay the game quite a few times to build up a complete picture of the objects and information available, before deciding on a strategy to solve the problems.

These are all very different in character, and the most sinister is home to some nasty monsters — including a dead demon whose atrocities are being devoured by insects, a very screaming night indeed, as you'll soon discover.

Most of the problems are not too hard, but the structure of the game makes them a little more difficult to put together, and the game a little more interesting to play than usual.

*Mystery Voyage* is in three parts, each of which must be completed to continue to the next. Two-word commands are the order of the day, and although the vocabulary leaves a little to be desired, it seems to cover most 'instinctive' words. For example, on coming across a beetle, I'm afraid I could not take it, I mistakenly tried SQUASH BEETLE, and it worked! Now what I'd want with the squashed beetle I was able to take, I have not yet any idea...

The text descriptions are full of atmosphere, but the replies to commands are sometimes a little cold, such as: YOU MAY NOW INPUT AN INSTRUCTION.

Altogether a pleasing game, that should entertain without being too baffling to enjoy.

## ADVENTURE CHART

1	3	Kentilla	Mastertronic
2	7	Daemondarks Revenge	Beyond
3	7	Alternate Reality	Datasoft/US Gold
4	NE	Price of Magic	Level 9
5	7	Lord of The Rings	Melbourne House
6	NE	Bored of The Rings	Silversoft
7	6	Quest for the Holy Grail	Mastertronic
8	NE	Very Big Cave Adventure	CRI
9	10	Red Moon	Level 9
10	NE	Asylum	Alt American/US Gold

## NEWS

A new *Lever-Jones* adventure can be expected from Melbourne House sometime in the autumn. The prototype version is already in the Quill stage, and like its predecessors *Hampstead* and *Terramolina*, will be converted into 'proper' code before release. The new game will have the player involved in a bank robbery with a bunch of East End crooks, in what promises to maintain the usual *Lever-Jones* standard of hilarity.

Watch out for another multi-player adventure/strategy game available through your modem, around the turn of the year. This one promises to be all that it promises — with the proven quality of Level 9 behind it. Entitled *Avelon*, it is already well into the game design stage, and Pete Austin and his brothers have very definite ideas about the hardware, too. Three or four micros with 68020 processors on board, will be linked to control the game, giving a far superior performance than the somewhat outdated end unsuitable VAX equipment used by BT's MUD.

No date is being quoted yet, as Pete doesn't want to let the fans down — but The Valley will be keeping an ear to the ground on your behalf!

As rumoured exclusively in The Valley a couple of months ago, Isaac Asimov is about to let adventurer's screens. Adventure Soft have won the licence to produce games under the title "Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine Presents:..."

This gives Mike Woodroffe's team the chance to 'adventurise' Asimov's works, as well as introducing some new science fiction stories of their own. First adventure in the series will be *Kyleth*, written by Stefan Ufnowski, known for his development of *Rebel Planet*.

Reinbird Software are to re-release the *Colossal Trilogy*, a revamped version of the Level 9 Middle Earth Trilogy. The three adventures featured are *Colossal Adventure*, *Dungeon Adventure* and *Adventure Quest*. Originally text-only games, and highly popular amongst enthusiasts, graphics will be added, and text augmented, for the new release.

*Night Orc* is a new title planned by Level 9 for the Reinbird label around September time. Here the player will get the chance to play the baddy for once, cast as a miserable cowardly Orc!

Graphics	n/a
Playability	★★★
Puzzleability	★★★★
Overall	★★★

5 Brookes Court, Baldwin Gardens, London EC1  
Telephone: 01-242 5409

Como pro joystick £14.50. Konek Speed-King £9.95.  
Harshol tenalog for revo £10.50. C16 interface laser £3.50.  
Postage UK free. Europe add £1 per tape. anywhere add £2 per tape.  
Payable by cash, cheque or credit card. Cash in hand. Delivery in 24 hours. Tel: 0114 276 1111.

Dept GU5, 5 Brooke Court, Baldwins Gardens EC1.

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# U.S. HOTLINE

## Weirdware revolution

Dan Gutman reports

You can play games with your 64, write letters, do your accounts, play a tune, paint a picture. What more could you want?

Well, if you're not satisfied with doing just ordinary things on your computer, you'd better start checking up on weirdware.

**Y**ou've heard of hardware? You've heard of software. But I'll bet pounds or dollars that you haven't heard of WEIRDWARE. It's a pretty safe bet for me. I invented weirdware.

Recently I've noticed a lot of computer programs that don't fit into the usual categories. They're not games. They're not educational. They're not business applications. They're not word processors. They're weird! Nobody else seems to pay much attention to this new type of software.

Let me give you an example. A company called Concept Development recently came out with a program called *Mr. Boston Official Bartender's Guide*. That's right — a computer program that teaches you how to mix drinks! Is that not weird, I don't know what is. But this thing is for real!

The program contains over 1,000 drink recipes with full mixing directions. The computer can search for the most popular summertime drinks or the necessary ingredients to mix a Bermuda Highball, and it will even tell you which drinks you can make if all you've got in the house are vodka and lime juice. (Vodka and lime? — *60*). You can print out the recipes and take them to the store with you. The thing is a whiz for all the booze hounds out there.

(If you're one of them, you can write for more information on the program — Concept Development, 7960 Old Georgetown Rd., Suite 20, Bethesda, Maryland 20814, USA.)

Mr. Boston may sound a little silly, but I wanted to prove a point. In the United States, everyone asks, "What can you do with a personal computer? Why do I need one?" Well, you can do hundreds of things. There's more to computer life than word processors

and games.

I have uncovered software for the Commodore 64/128 that will help you trace your family roots, learn to speedread, learn Morse code, direct a frog, build your muscles, analyze your personality, make paper airplanes, analyze your sexuality, and do more. Some of them are practical, some are merely interesting, and some are kind of goofy. There's even a program that will help you write your last will and testament (which proves that computers can be useful even if you're dead!).

You probably haven't heard of this stuff because it's made by small companies that don't have a lot of money to spend on advertising and publicity. But these are real programs from professional software publishers. You can buy them and run them right out of the box, and you don't even have to know anything about computers or programming.

Is there anything like this in England? If so, please write me and tell me about it. I love weirdware. Who needs spreadsheets and databases when there are programs out there that keep track of your bowling average?

Here's a small sample of some American weirdware you might be interested in. I've provided the addresses of all the companies so you can write for more information.

● **Plantat! Pal** Helps you plan your garden. Tells you which plants grow best in which temperature ranges and how much of each vegetable you should plant to feed a specific number of people. Also designs the layout of the garden according to how much space you have. (*Home & Hobby Software, 4336 Morgan Ave. South, Minneapolis MN 55409*).

● **Biorhythm Status** People who believe in biorhythms think our physical, emotional and intellectual well being go up and down in regular cycles that start the day we are born. This program calculates your personal biorhythm chart and tells you what

your status is today (*Ashby & Associates, P.O. Box 534, Chagrin Falls, Ohio 44022 USA*).

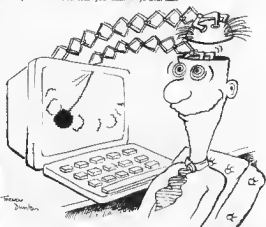
● **BodyLink** This is a weird new device that is basically a big metal spring that plugs in the back of the C64/128. It comes with a simple game in which a helicopter flies around when you press on the spring. The harder you press, the longer the helicopter stays in the air. So as you play the game, you're getting a workout! Has to be seen to be believed! (*BodyLog, 120 Mt. Kisco Ave., Mt. Kisco, New York 10849 USA*).

● **The Hypnotist** A hardware/software device that uses biofeedback and behavior modification techniques to put you into a trance state. Once you're under, the computer can flash subliminal messages to help you stop smoking, lose weight or stop bad habits. (*Playcom Software, 2116 Forest Lake Dr., Cincinnati, Ohio 45244 USA*).

● **CBS Digital Music Library** The music of famous pianists like Scott Joplin and George Gershwin had been "digitally" preserved on player piano rolls. Those rolls have now been translated to floppy disks, so you can actually hear Gershwin playing piano in your house! Outrageous! (*Micro-V, 13528 Route 23, Butler, New Jersey 07405 USA*).

And that doesn't even scratch the surface! It's impossible for me to cover all the weirdware out there on this one page. So, guess what, Commodore fans. I'm writing a book on the subject! I'm not sure of the exact title yet, but it will probably be something along the lines of "I Didn't Know You Could Do That With A Computer!" and you should SCREAM at your local bookseller until he orders a few thousand copies for his store. Tell him weirdware is what it's at. Tell him weirdware is what the computer revolution needs. Tell him computer lovers need this book.

And tell him I need the money. See ya next time.



# Play to WiN

Ocean's *V* game, based on the TV series of the same name, asked you to play the part of the rebel leader Donovan but it didn't give you much help as to how.

We've put together a comprehensive set of hints that'll put you one up on the aliens and enable you to save earth. Phew! And you'd thought you'd never do it.

You will probably have noticed that the map for "V" changes over time you RESTORE the game. However, when initially loaded, the first game is always the same — so a few specific playtipe are given later to help with the first game only

## GENERAL PLAY

Practice exactly where to stand on the beamer pads so that you don't repeatedly switch the Communicator on when trying to teleport. This will save vital time (a) after the explosives have been laid, (b) when running from

hostile robots.

If not on the first game, **RESTORE** the game until you start on plane 0 or 4 — this will make your bombing run easier as explained below.

Your first priority should be to empty red dust into the air: collect parts of the formulae from one lab in each plane, once all 5 parts of the dust formulae have been collected, use the recall data key to examine the 5 symbols on the "Data recall" card.

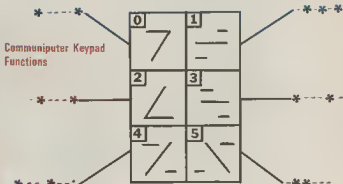
Translate each of their values using the keypad and add all 5 together. Convert this sum back into base 6 and now translate this base 6

docking bay (either 0 or 4 provided you *did* start as explained above!), find the key point (there is only 1 per plane) and plant a bomb. You now have approx. 30 minutes to finish the game, so head rapidly for the next plane.

Repeating this process on every plane you should finish in the decking bay — plant the final bomb and . . .  
 war and so on!

### NOTES ON PLAY

**VITAL:** when planting bombs make sure that your 'present location' as given by the Communiputer exactly



\* Indicates that figure in the code is altered  
— Indicates figure is not altered

	1st	6th
Code example.	Character	V
	17+7+7	



number into lizard symbols. Now go to the air plant, log on to the computer terminal there and enter this number into the air plant computer terminal using the keypad. This will reduce the frequency and efficiency of hostile robots. It also makes the screen turn a lovely shade of pink.

Now head to the plane which is furthest from the

matches that of the key point to be bombed. Failure to do this will result in extreme confusion (!) when the last bomb is planted in the bay and Donovan then finds he has to sit around until he becomes a Mikeburger.

When strolling around the decks, remember that beamer pods always take you below any well which they are adjacent to — they will

sometimes he arranged to look otherwise (pads in vertical line, but the top pad in the middle of a passage). Any pad not next to a wall blocking the passage will take you UP

When searching for inter-plane doors remember:

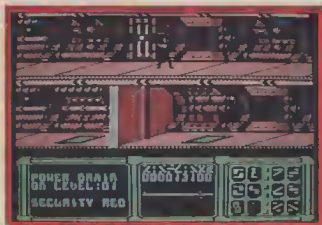
Outward doors take you from plane 4 0 and have RED insignia.

Inward doors take you from plane 0 and have YELLOW insignia.

## RECHARGING

The laser may be recharged at 2 types of terminal:

1) Two white vertical lines run from floor and ceiling to a black box with 1 white blob at its centre. Place Donovan so his head covers the single white blob



2) Outside the left-hand security door of labs are what look like bright horizontal fluorescent tubes. Place Donovan so his head is directly beneath the vertical (cyan) bar just beyond this.

To recharge pull down on the joystick as if switching the Commputer on, and hold until the laser power (the red line) is completely replenished

## SECURITY DOORS

(N.B. See diagram for

explanation of Commputer keys in security cracking.)

One of the commonest problems when cracking doors is when you are left with all the characters similar except one.

Use the keys to get the one character to either end of the code. Now use the following sequence, each time pressing the key mentioned until the one unusual character has been moved to a different place in the code (but there are still 5 similar characters):

0- to move it to 6th

character (in code)

2- to move it to 2nd

character

5- to move it to 3rd

character

1- to change the code

until only the 1st and 5th

characters are unusual

3- to complete the code

## NOTES ON FIRST GAME

Here are a few hints to help play on the 1st game: The code for the Air Plant is Key 1 followed by Key 2. The formulas are in the following labs:

Plane	Lab location
4	5,6
3	15,4
2	5,5
1	15,2
0	15,4

## A NOTE ON BASE 6

In base 6 each digit in the 2nd column represents 6 and the highest value in the column is 5. In the 1st column each digit represents 1 but again the highest value is 5, so the highest number is 55 which represents 35 in base 10,  $(5*6) + (5*1)$ . E.g. 9 in base 10 is 13 in base 6,  $(1*6) + (3*1)$ .

Daniel Gilbert



# Play to Win

# Play to Win

Since we gave it a Screen Star last month, *Spindizzy* has had us glued to the screen. The gameplay, based on the excellent coin-op *Marble Madness*, is classically addictive as you guide a sphere through networks of shapes collecting jewels. We were worried about the effect it might have on some of you if you couldn't finish it, so we asked David Conti and Adrian Bott to put together a little map and a few tips to help you on your way



The following hints are to be used in conjunction with the accompanying map. Positions are shown by grid reference and switches referred to by appropriate letter.

▼  
X18 has a secret passage in the bottom left-hand wall that leads to Y/18

▼  
In X/20 touch switch type D — the lift is now operational.

▼  
In Y/20 touch switch type A then D; this produces a useful bridge.

▼  
E1/21 is the start of some fun on the trampolines. Go up the lifts and stop on the far end of the blocks. Now charge very fast onto the trampolines; you should bounce clear of the first room of eraser switches and land on the next set of trampolines which spring you into H/21. Proceed into H/20 and touch switch type D — use the ramp to exit the room, or the eraser switches will negate your hard work. The switches you have are used in H/22 to help you get the jewel.

▼  
In Y/10 activate switches type F and H: these start two lifts, which have to be started at different times if they are to be used successfully. In C1/13 activate switch type I — the lift will start to move. Stop it with switch type K when it is level with the top block. If you're positioning as correct, you should be able to roll up the ramp and on to the lift. Below you are a pair of eraser switches which must be jumped over from the lift. If this is successfully done, go to D1/11 and use switch

type D. A bridge and a gap in the wall should appear — this opens up a new area!

▼  
In Q/15 use switches type D and F to activate lift in Q/16 and to create an exit bridge in R/16. In Q/2 use lift to go up then carefully touch switch B. Another bridge is created. Use this to enter Q/3 and use switch type D to create yet another bridge. Use this to enter Q/4, and use the trampolines here to bounce you into Q/5

▼  
In O/15 touch switch type H then descend ramp in to M/14. In M/14 touch switch F. Now go down steps and into O/16 — you should notice a large ramp has appeared. If you go up this and use switch J it will open a door in M/15. But first go to N/13, up the ramp and jump on to the large set of blocks with the jewel. Go down the small ramp and jump through N/14 and N/15 as fast as possible. You should end up in N/16. Here, touch switch type B — this starts the lift in M/15. In M/15 go up the lift and touch switch type I. Leave the room, go to O/14 and up the ramp into O/13. Use the lift to reach the other platform. Now fly off the platform as fast as you can and on to the trampolines — you will bounce into the next locations. You should land on the isolated platform in O/16. Touch switch type D (which helps in room O/14) and use the steps to go down. Now go to P/14, up the ramp and into O/14. Use the switch, which starts the lift in M/14. If these are used correctly, you will be free to explore again.

▼  
In W/25 go up the ramp and then carefully into X/25. From there go to X/24 and use switch B, go down via lift and then roll on to

catwalk at screen left. Proceed to X/28; stay on the raised blocks to avoid the eraser switches. Now head to V/28, where you will notice a ramp that leads to V/30. Get a long run up and jump into this room.

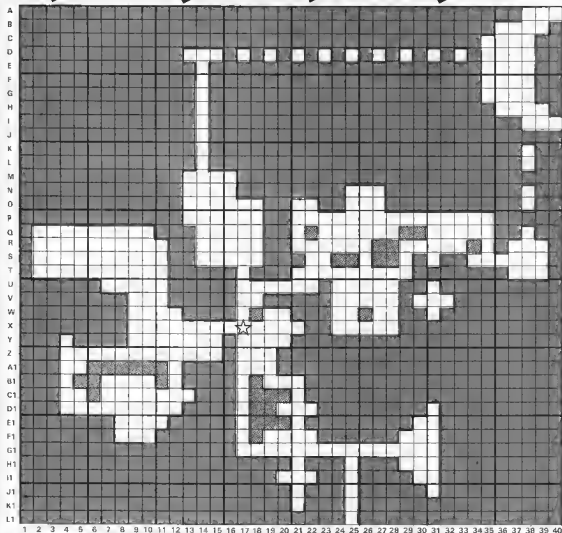
▼  
From V/30 go to V/31 and use trampolines to enter W/31 and U/31. Activate switch B in W/31 and D in U/31. Now, with both switches, go to V/32 and use lifts to get to switch. This switch creates a ramp in U/31 — use this to jump into S/31

## KEY

### SWITCHES



# SPINDIZZY



## Play to Win

# Play to Win

Welcome to Play to Win. We've moved it from the supplements to the magazine. Each month we'll be mapping a popular game, and bringing you a selection of pokes, cheats and advice on software across a whole range of machines.

## COMMANDO C-16



We kick off this month with a map of the alien mothership in *Vandenberg* and back this up with a pile of pokes to take the strain out of your gaming. There's tips too on *Nodes of Yessod*, *Kung Fu Master* and *Time Tunnel*, plus a few helpful bits and pieces.

We'll be doing most of the work, but we also want to hear from you. We want your tips and hints and we'll pay you fair and square in the hand. If we print anything you send in — and remember it must be original and up-to-date — we'll give you the choice of one of the latest games or a fiver. You can't say fairer than that can you?

## KUNG FU MASTER

Richard Allen has the upper hand on *Kung Fu Master* and decided to impart to us his knowledge of the guardians.

**1st Floor.** There's a man with a stick who confronts you. Run straight at him and go as far forward as you can. He will then move back. Kick him twice and then run forward, he will move back again, and so on.

**2nd Floor (Man with boomerang)** You can tell if this guy's going to throw it high or low. If he's going to throw it high, run in towards him duck down and kick him until he falls. If he throws it low, stay back, jump over it then run in and kick him.

**3rd Floor (Giant)** Duck down and when he comes towards you, you do a lot of leg sweeps until he falls.

**4th Floor (Magicians)** Use the punch here. Take the one on the left first and then the one on the right dropping down to punch to his body.

**5th Floor (Kung Fu Master)** Use every sort of move on him except the jump punch.

G-Force member James Pickering has generously offered to share a few of his pokes for C16 titles.

## ROCKMAN

When you are in room 1, the exit usually takes you to room 2, but if you alter the machine code it could be any room, the music also changes. M1E70 change B3 to B5: SYS4128 runs the game.

## XARGON WARS

Start the game at Xargon 09 M2A50 change B3 to B9: SYS7296 runs the game.

## MR. PUNIVERSE

This tip takes out the cannons and levels out the pulverisers. M1SFO change B2 to B9: SYS6902 runs the game.

Also in Mr Puniverse you can jump backwards at great speed and walk through walls backwards, so you can get onto all different screens. M2170 change 38 to 39: SYS6900.

And now if you'd rather let your fingers do the talking in gameplaying here's a few pokes to give you that added edge.

## COMMANDO

After a full reset, POKE 2225, 240 and SYS 2128 to start the game with extra lives.

## WIZARDRY

**Type LOAD**, when small bit loads, type POKE 1011,248, POKE 1012,252 (RETURN) RUN

When BOVA loads, 64 bit reset. Then

POKE 2969,0 (RETURN)

SYS 2016 (RETURN)

The four slow sections will load. After they load, type

POKE 3216,236 50766,255 (RETURN)

POKE 3264,234 3265,234 (RETURN)

POKE 27214,234 50151,234 (RETURN)

POKE 50152,234 50153,234 (RETURN)

SYS 2970

These pokes will give you more energy and stop most of the natives from killing you. Thanks to Bruno Jackson, Lancaster

## BLACKWYCHE

David Fairweather at Darwen in Lancashire has sent us some pokes for infinite energy in *Blackwyche*.

10 SYS 63278: POKE 830,100: POKE 831,174: POKE 832, 102: SYS 62826

20 FOR A = 679 TO 767: POKE A, FREE (25088 + A): NEXT

30 FOR A = 628 TO 1200: POKE A, PEEK (25088 + A): NEXT

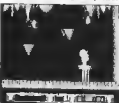
40 POKE 950, 141: POKE 991,74: POKE 992,18: SYS 1024

## NODES OF YESOD

Play from the keyboard because some of the jumps require pixel accuracy. In general don't stand around for long periods and use the pause facility frequently.

There are three main types of nasties in the game:

- 1) Monsters that can be destroyed, such as spring monsters, bugs, crystal clouds and whirlwinds. Use the mole to destroy them as this does not drain your energy.
- 2) Indestructible monsters. These are horned demons, rock monsters, repulsor plants, fish, worms, liver birds and cockroaches. Contact with these will bounce you all over the screen draining large amounts of energy. The mole has no effect on these so they're best avoided where possible. Their movements always take place along fixed paths so they can be dodged with a bit of timing.
- 3) Alien specimen. Your only defence is to leave the screen — they won't follow, or place an anti-gravity stick



Gravity sticks are acquired with extra lives. These destroy all killable monsters but should be saved for the alien specimen.

**Mole Mode:** Once the mole starts to eat into a well you are powerless to recall it, therefore before activating it try to hid in the lee of a plinth or under a low stone outcrop which tend to deflect many of the monsters that home in you.

**False floors:** the edge of these can be found as the mole is able to sink into them.

**Updraught chute.** In here you move through many screens safely. You can rise up the chute simply by jumping from the bottom. Beware though as you will gravitate to which ever well you are facing. If this doesn't contain the mole hole you entered through, you will reach the roof and then plummet rapidly to lose a life.

## TIME TUNNEL

Justin Stoddart from Greys, Essex wrote to us with some hints to help you through some of the locations in US Gold's *Time Tunnel*.

### STONEHENGE

Get the stick and shoot down the two small rocks with your lightning which are at the top of the screen. Take them all to the round boulder blocking your path on the left. Put the stick up against the boulder, then climb to the top platform with the two rocks and drop the large on first then the small one. The boulder should now move.

Go along to the cave on the next screen, the scripture is in a cave.

### MAGICAL PERSIA

Take the glass from the mansion and place it next to the flask of wine where the woman is, drop them, the woman will come down and give you a key you need to get the dynamite from the safe aboard the spaceship. With this and the lantern blow up the large boulder. Take the lantern through the hole with you and get the lamp from the room. Take the lamp to the basket and shoot the lamp. Open the basket and play the flute to the snake.

### INTERGALACTIC SPACESHIP

Pull the two levers in the spaceship go back to the control panel and take the cross from it. Go to the right through the floor and open the safe. Take the cross and

place it in the cross shape to the right of the safe, then go through the door that opens (before this get the oxygen tank from the California Gold Rush (where the lift is). Put the triangle key found in the safe in the bottom of the first ped. Put the oxygen tank on the same ped as you and the transport to the moon the piece of scripture is in the top right hand corner.



### COLONIAL SALEM

Get the broom from the shop plus the second potion and take them to the log house on the left. Firstly get the brown cauldron from the spaceship. Then put the cauldron in the fireplace, put the broom in the cauldron and the two potions and a bat that you can shoot. Fire at all this twice then jump on the broom go out of the house over to the island, the piece of scripture is under a rock, so is the way back to Gnome Mansion.

## YIE AR KUNG FU

Lots of people have had trouble getting past the last, and toughest fighter called 'Blues' in Ocean's *Yie Ar Kung-Fu*. Here's how Fu Sang Li from Cheshire does it.

When you get on to Blues, do not move from your position. Just before he lands next to you, pull down your joystick and keep on hitting the fire button like mad (and I mean like mad). If your joystick has auto-fire, then use it! If Blues decides to move to left or right then quickly move the joystick slightly to the opposite direction, and keep hitting the fire button. If you follow these instructions correctly, then you should be able to beat him (my highest score is 3,847,600 points).

Here's a few quickies for you ● ● ●

### RAMBO

For Rambo fans struggling to beat the enemy helicopter, plug in two joysticks and push one forward and the other back to get a turbo up the screen.



### ACE

This one's for ACE players: climb to around 50,000 feet after take off and then go into a nose dive at full speed. When you reach 18000 throttle right back, velocity should reach around 20,000 — pull out of the dive with no thrust. The plane will then fly at 2000 without using any fuel.



### TOM THUMB

Here's one for C16 owners, from Paul O'Brien of Salford. If when you play *Tom Thumb* you find it very frustrating to get sent back to the beginning every time you lose a life, instead of pressing fire to restart pull back on the joystick. This will result in you being put back to the place where you last picked something up or opened a door.



### WINTER GAMES

To achieve massive distance in the Ski Jump in *Winter Games* just follow Dutch reader Rued van Spanje's tip. As soon as you take off wiggle your joystick round and round (like cycling in *Summer Games II*) to achieve a huge jump

# Play to Win

Send your pokes, tips, news etc. to: Play to Win, Commodore Users, P.O. Box 100, 30-32 Farmingdale Lane, ECH 3AU





# Get more from SUPERBASE by Geof Wheelwright

## Part One

Superbase is probably the most popular and the most sophisticated database around for the 64 and 128. But the more you'll need to understand about it. We start a two-part series this month, showing you how to make full use of this sophisticated program. We asked the technical department at Precision Software to come up with answers to questions most often asked by Superbase users.

**Q How can I use Superbase to generate records with a particular field? For example, numbers, for example?**

**A** The following program will create a new record with invoice numbers stored in a key field called "key". The key field is four characters in length. The numbers are placed in the key field of a new record and then that record is stored. In order to keep the file in order the numbers have leading zeroes placed in front of them to make sure they are stored in sequence.

The program also makes use of a command called "check": this command is used here to ensure that there is a field called "key" in this file. If you want to avoid running the program on an incorrect file, you must give the key field a name that is not shared by a field in any other file. If you have selected the wrong file, the program will display the message "you are in the wrong file", ask for the correct file name and to execute itself.

```
10 set "store":rem get last
   number
20 b=val(b):rem convert string
   to real number
30 b=b*100-str(b):rem make key
   with new number
40 check "f2f":display "you
   are in the wrong file":
   wait:filnam
41 else: f2=b
45 store:compact b:select *from
   store
50 dump "store"
100 ask "Another?":if
   a="Y"or a="y":then goto
   20
110 if a="N"or a="n":then
   mean
130 display @+ "Incorrect
   Response. Retry": goto 100
```

Before running the program it is necessary to set a starting value for the variable B and to store it in a file called "store". To do this, type the following on the command line. ctrl-b="0000":dump "store" and press RETURN.

A file called "store" will be created using B. This program is an example only. In order to take full advantage of the full power of Superbase, you will need to learn to use such routines in programs specifically written with your needs in mind. Use of the programming section of the Superbase manual, and any book on basic programming will help you develop your skills in using Superbase.

**Q Every time I use Superbase I have to set my own margins and printer definitions. Can I do it in a simpler way?**

**A** Yes. Edit the "start" program on your work disk. When Superbase first looks at your work disk it uses the start program to set all the default page layout and printer interfacing. The start program may be edited and saved back to the work disk. Now each time that disk is used, your custom default values will be set up automatically.

In the same way, the start program can be used to present a menu, enter a specific file or database, perform a report, update a set of records or just about anything else. All this may be achieved just by editing the start program.

**Q When I use the labels program and I don't want to use an existing layout I get "file not found error". Why?**

**A** Early copies of the labels program had one part only. Later copies have a second part called "makelabels". It is this part that cannot be found. To correct this, transfer makelabels to your work disk.

**Q Can I load data into Superbase from another database or from a word processor?**

**A** Yes, providing that a sequential file of known format is used with the export command built into Superbase. The key thing to remember is that the file format and the arrangement of data in the disk file must

correspond exactly. If they do not, the operation will become unsynchronized and fail.

**Q Why do I only get half a page when I use the screen dump command for the third time?**

**A** The screen dump option is sometimes thought by naive users to be the main way of obtaining printed copies of records. In fact it is intended as an occasional convenience. However, there are circumstances in which the screen dump is valuable, when you want hard copies of your record formats or memo screens as help screens. But you may find if you use the function repeatedly that every third CTRL-P seems to fail.

The reason is that Superbase counts the printed lines against the current value for CTRL-P, normally 60. As the length of format and memo screens is 23 lines, two CTRL-P's take the counter to 48, leaving insufficient room for the third screen. The solution is to set CTRL-P to 48, which causes Superbase to start a new page after every two printouts.

The CTRL-O option is not available in all versions of Superbase. It is similar to CTRL-P, except that the top two lines of the screen are also printed. The option is intended to facilitate documentation of the system. Note that you would have to set CTRL-P to 50 to permit repeated printouts with CTRL-O.

**Q When I delete records I don't release any disk space - why?**

**A** Superbase compacts data and allocates space in half blocks. This means that intervals are fast and storage is economic. But, it also means that if only half a block is in use after a delete, the whole block needs to remain allocated.

To regain and compact deleted record space use the utility program.



# Money Matters

by Geof Wheelwright

Cal-Kit reviewed

CalKit describes itself as the "complete problem solving software package" — problems of the financial variety, that is. It claims to let you use your Commodore 64/128 to come to grips with nasties like Income Tax, balancing your cheque-book, planning budgets and many more sticky money problems in the home or small business.

CalKit is an unusual piece of software that looks like a spreadsheet but acts like a series of financial programs — intended both for the home and the office.

But the idea is really pretty simple: rather than just offstage a bog standard spreadsheet (in which there are now a large number for the 64) or the usual collection of checkbook balancer, investment portfolio manager, budget planner found in other "specialist" financial "bundles", Batteries Inc. decided to combine the two.

The result is a spreadsheet which comes ready-made with 20 different "forms" to solve what its authors call "home, school and business problems". It comes as the high standard of packaging we have come to expect from both Batteries Inc. and

419 (T) BALANCE

OPTION: MASSIVE

enter

APPLIANCE COST OF ELECTRICITY

Appliance	Watts	Hrs. w.
Air conditioner (central)	10000	2.0
Air conditioner (window)	5000	3.0
Baking oven	800	0.5
Washer, elec.	150	0.5
Bottle warmer	350	0.5
Refrigerator	1500	0.5
Freezer	175	0.5
Light	5	0.5
Other maker	700	0.5

▲ Do you really need to know how much your corn popper costs to run?

using this software due to a physically damaged master disk.

Once you've loaded the software, the screen looks very familiar. The majority of it is taken up with a standard-looking 40 columns 'worksheet' with cells defined in the A1:B1...etc convention — cells A1 to D18 can be viewed on screen at this point.

The difference is, however, that the top line (row) of the screen are taken up with non-standard spreadsheet information. The top line shows the actual contents of a cell (cell references, formulas, etc); the second line deals with 'option messages'; the third with telling you essential details such as how much free memory you

have left, the fourth with menu options (Load, Save, Print, Disk and Quit) and the fifth is actually allow you to type in commands from the fourth-line menu.

The top-heavy screen information structure probably takes up a little more space than it needs to — and when combined with the optional 'help' system at the bottom of the screen — leaves you little room to actually look at what you're working on. Although a spreadsheet is inevitably only a 'window' onto a larger piece of work, the more you can see of that window, the easier it is to work with.

The real advantage of CalKit over any other spreadsheet, however, has to come in the many pre-defined

▼ Cheque book balancer lets you keep tabs on your family spending.



Cal-Kit — a set of ready-to-use spreadsheets to solve your money problems.

AmigaSoft (the UK importer responsible for bringing in so many US 64/128 business applications into the country), with joystick port ROM 'key', disk and manual in a sturdy plastic box.

Although the software comes with only one disk and no backup copy, the use of a ROM key to ensure against copy protection means that you can make as many backup copies as you like of the software. There's no danger of you passing those copies onto friends, however, as they won't run without the ROM key plugged into the joystick port — but it does mean that you should never be prevented from

A22 (T) BALANCE

OPTION: MASSIVE

enter

	DATE	DEBIT	CREDIT	BALANCE
Salary 2	750.00	750.00	750.00	
Other Inc.	118.00	125.00	65.00	
<b>Total Inc.</b>	<b>2668.00</b>	<b>2675.00</b>	<b>2615.00</b>	
Expenses				
Mortgage	750.00	750.00	750.00	
Utilities	35.42	100.00	102.47	
Telephone	54.76	65.00	62.30	
Clothing	217.97	180.00	43.00	
Entertain.	126.50	129.00	207.00	
<b>Total Exp.</b>	<b>1244.65</b>	<b>1140.00</b>	<b>1247.27</b>	
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>1415.35</b>	<b>1535.00</b>	<b>1367.73</b>	
<b>TOTAL BALANCE</b>			<b>5913.00</b>	

- **Home Budget** – a home budget form with categories already created for most common household costs, incomes and expenses. It features two columns for each month – one with your budgeted expenses and incomes and the other with your

• **Check book** — the ubiquitous electronic chequebook balances makes yet another appearance here. But, this seems a slightly more basic spreadsheet model than is really called for.

Although I would like to think that these pre-programmed strings and the others that are included in this package are somewhat a leap forward for spreadsheet designers, I can't help thinking that this is just a clever way of re-packaging a pretty un-descript B4 spreadsheet.

Also it's worrying that such a package should ignore such essential U.K.-oriented problems as VAT calculations. This suggests that not enough effort and attention has been paid to Anglicising the program — it really isn't good enough.

The real problem is that CalKit appears to be a bit of a mystasy 'grab bag' of pre-defined elements — none of which really grabbed me. At the pace however, it's not a bad general purpose spreadsheet and is suitable for most lightweight calculation work. □

- CalKit
- Commodore 64/128
- Ariolasoft Ltd  
68 Long Acre  
London WC1  
01-836 3411
- Price: £34.95 (disk only)

# BUSINESS NEWS

## Paperclip gets Spelling Checker

Ariolasoft has just announced an enhanced version of *New Paperclip* (reviewed in the May issue). The new package contains the Spellpack spelling checker, available both in 64 and 128 mode, on the same disk. Of course, you'll have to pay a little bit more for it, £58.85 in fact. Spellpack's dictionary comes in two parts: the core dictionary has 15,000 words whilst the user dictionary is empty ready for your own words to be added. Dictionary contents can be viewed and printed too. More details from Ariolasoft on 01-836 3411.

## Timeworks for 128

Timeworks, one of America's leading producers of 84/128 software, has set up shop in Britain and has released U.K. versions of its acclaimed disk-based C-128 business programs. Packages on offer are the *Swiftlock 128* spreadsheet, the *Data Manager 128* database, *Word Whizzer 128* and *Sideways*. They all work in 128 mode and can be interfaced with each other to form a complete system.

The spreadsheet, database and wordprocessor will cost £60 each, with Sideswys coming in at £35. Sideswys (as the name suggests) lets you print out a complete spreadsheet horizontally on paper — the text is rotated 90 degrees. It also has a variety of type sizes. We're all set to review them next month.

## Graph Paper

Alloesoft must be convinced that the 64 has a glowing future in business. Yet another package it's imported from the States is *B/Graph*, described as a professional graphics-charting and statistical analysis program. Use it in sales, marketing and general administration to impress customers or your boss.

B/Graph offers a wide variety of graph types, including bar, segmented bar, point, line and pie charts. It also supports popular printers like the Epson, Star, NEC and Okidata range. All in all, this has to rank as one of the better graphics packages for the 64 and is well worth a look, especially at the price of £29.95.



# BUSINESS NEWS



# Q.K. Quiz Time!

- 1 Where can you find over 100 **FREE** software programs a year?
- 2 Who can you go to for **FREE** round the clock advice and help?
- 3 How can you get instant news, views, gossip and "hands on" reviews **24 hours a day**?
- 4 Who gives you **FREE** national electronic mail?
- 5 Where can you "chat" with 70,000 other micro users?
- 6 Who'll help you publish your own database for all to see?
- 7 How can you take part in national multi-user strategy games?
- 8 How can you book a seat on the 3.15 from Euston—at midnight?

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Telephone: 01-278 3143

To: Micronet 800, 8 Herbal Hill, London EC1

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Micro \_\_\_\_\_

CU 7/86

# Insult Construction Set !!!\*\*\*

Thought up any good insults lately? If you've ever been stuck for a few sharpened words, a well-turned nasty phrase, then Fred Reid's Insult Construction Set is for you. Have fun offending as many people as you can, make loads of new enemies and, best of all, customise the program to suit your very own insulting needs.

**for the Commodore 64, 128, 16 and Plus/4**  
**by Fred Reid**

Here it is, exclusive to *Commodore User*, your very own personal insult generator. Forget boring old Golf Construction Set, Pinball Construction Set, Adventure Construction Set — be really nasty with your very own Insult Construction Set.

ICS lets you generate not just words, but a whole sentence-ful of vile and nasty utterances. The program is simple — its databank contains four sections that combine to build up to 10,000 different insults — that should be enough to be getting along with.

And we've provided you with an alternative set of insults. So you can type in either Insult Set 1 or Insult Set 2 together with the Main Program. But you won't be able to use both sets in the same program.

If you want to customise your own insults, you'll find that the DATA statements are arranged in four groups, each with ten lines. These are the components that make up the eventual sentence. Simply put what you like in the appropriate sections.

Here's how the program works:

- Lines 20-140 these contain the databank of phrases
- Lines 420-540 these print an introductory message on the screen and read the Data statements into an array (this makes all the parts easier for the computer to get at them)
- Lines 550-580 these produce the four random numbers needed to select the various parts of the insult
- Line 590 this adds all the parts together

The rest of the program is concerned with printing the insult on the screen tidily



# struction

# EASY ENTER

## MAIN PROGRAM



Insult Set One

20 DATAWHY DON'T YOU  
30 DATAI THINK YOU SHOULD  
40 DATAI SUGGEST YOU  
50 DATALISTEN GORILLA FACE\*  
60 DATANOW LOOK HERE YOU EXCUSE FOR A MOMENT  
70 DATAIT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA IF YOU  
80 DATAYOU COULD ALWAYS  
90 DATAWHY NOT  
100 DATASHUT IT DOG BREATH  
110 DATATHERE IS NO REASON WHY YOU CAN'T  
120 DATA STOP BOTHERING ME AND  
130 DATA GO AND  
140 DATA LEAVE ME IN PEACE AND  
150 DATA MAKE ME VERY HAPPY AND  
160 DATA GO SOMEWHERE AND  
170 DATA GET OUT OF MY LIFE AND  
180 DATA DO SOMETHING MORE WORTHWHILE AND  
190 DATA QUIT BUGGINS ME AND  
200 DATA GO AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE AND  
210 DATA SOLVE ALL MY PROBLEMS AND  
220 DATA JUMP UNDER  
230 DATA DO AN IMPRESSION OF  
240 DATA BE SICK OVER  
250 DATA PLAY WITH  
260 DATA SWALLOW  
270 DATA DRINK  
280 DATA MAKE ANDROID ADVANCES TOWARDS  
290 DATA TAKE THE MICKY OUT OF  
300 DATA SIT ON  
310 DATA SERENADE  
320 DATA A HOWLING DOUBLE-DECKER BUS  
330 DATA A POISONOUS SPIDER  
340 DATA A STEAMROLLER  
350 DATA AN UNEXPLODED BOMB  
360 DATA TOWER BRIDGE  
370 DATA A FALLING PIANO  
380 DATA A CUCUMBER  
390 DATA BARRY MANLOW'S NOSE  
400 DATA A SINCLAIR SPECTRUM  
410 DATA A PORCUPINE

Insult Set Two

20 DATACALL YOURSELF  
30 DATAYOU RECKON YOU'RE  
40 DATASO YOU THINK YOU'RE  
50 DATAYOU CAN'T BE ALL THAT  
60 DATADON'T ANYBODY ELSE THINK YOU'RE  
70 DATADO I THINK YOU'RE  
80 DATADO YOU REALLY THINK YOU'RE  
90 DATADO YOU EXPECT PEOPLE TO BE JEALOUS  
100 DATAYOU  
110 DATADO YOU REALLY BELIEVE YOU'LL  
120 DATA INTELLIGENT?  
130 DATA GOOD LOOKING?  
140 DATA FIT?  
150 DATA RICH?  
160 DATA STREETWISE?  
170 DATA USEFUL?  
180 DATA ATHLETIC?  
190 DATA DYNAMIC?  
200 DATA ADVENTUROUS?  
210 DATA SUBTLE?  
220 DATA I'VE BEEN BETTER PLAINS  
230 DATA YOU GET MORE HAIR  
240 DATA I GET THERE'S MORE MURDER  
250 DATA I GET MORE EXCITEMENT  
260 DATA I'VE BEEN MORE LIFE  
270 DATA THERE'S MORE ACTION  
280 DATA YOU GET AS MUCH ACTIVITY  
290 DATA YOU'D GET MORE FUN  
300 DATA YOU'D BE MORE USEFUL  
310 DATA YOU SHOULD BE  
320 DATA IN A BUTCHER'S WINDOW  
330 DATA ON A BILLBOARD  
340 DATA ON MY AUNTIE'S CAT  
350 DATA IN A MUSEUM  
360 DATA FROM A SQUEEZED PINEAPPLE  
370 DATA ON THE BEACH  
380 DATA IN A FLOCK OF SHEEP  
390 DATA PLAYING HIDE  
400 DATA WATCHING GOLF  
410 DATA ON EASTENDERS

# EASY ENTER

Our New Easy Enter system makes program entering even simpler. It works like this:

Control codes appear in plain English (always inside brackets). Just look them up in the list below. For example, (DOWN) means 'press the cursor down key'. We've included the graphic itself in the table so that you can check you've got it right.

Actual graphic characters are not changed and appear as they do on screen - you'll find them all printed on your keyboard.

## Control Codes

(UP)	press cursor up key	↑
(DOWN)	press cursor down key	↓
(LEFT)	press cursor left key	←
(RIGHT)	press cursor right key	→
(HOME)	press HOME key	⌂
(CLR)	press SHIFT HOME	⌂
(INST)	press SHIFT DELETE	⌂
(RVS)	reverse on	↔
(OEE)	reverse off	↔
(F1etc)	press function key indicated	F1
(F130)	flash on (16 and Plus 4)	⬇
(F132)	flash off (16 and Plus 4)	⬆

## Colour Codes

(BLK)	press CTRL and 1	■
(WHT)	press CTRL and 2	■
(RED)	press CTRL and 3	■
(CYN)	press CTRL and 4	■
(PUR)	press CTRL and 5	■
(GRN)	press CTRL and 6	■
(BLU)	press CTRL and 7	■
(YEL)	press CTRL and 8	■
(ORNG)	press CBM and 1	■
(BRN)	press CBM and 2	■
(URED)	press CBM and 3	■
(GRY1)	press CBM and 4	■
(GRY2)	press CBM and 5	■
(LGRN)	press CBM and 6	■
(LBLU)	press CBM and 7	■
(GRY3)	press CBM and 8	■

Note: secondary colours on the 16 and Plus 4 are slightly different to the above.

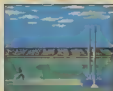


# Sixteen ways to a Golden Summer.



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- FREESTYLE RELAY



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- JAVELIN
- EQUESTRIAN EVENTS
- 1-8 PLAYERS

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- Commodore User

'The sports simulation to end all sports simulations'  
- Zap 64

'The graphics are stunning'  
- Computer Gamer



**Commodore 64**

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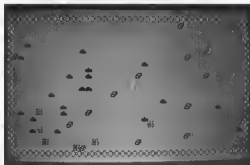
**£14.95 £9.95**

**EPYX**  
COMPUTER SOFTWARE

**THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SELLING OLYMPIC SIMULATION**

Here's a fast action treasure grabbing game for both 16 and Plus/4 owners — type it in and you've got it for free.

Use your joystick (in port two) to manoeuvre your treasurehunter towards the ingots. Avoid the mines, the perimeter fence and the grids. When you've collected all the ingots, exit to the next screen by means of one of the grids.



# MINERFIELD

by G. Vance

— for the Commodore 16 and Plus/4

```

10 VOLS
20 COLOR0,6.5;COLOR4,6.4
30 PORT=14336TO14799
40 READA
50 POKET,A
60 NEXTT
70 DATA126,129,189,177,177,189,129,126
80 DATA124,254,198,198,254,254,198,198
90 DATA252,254,198,252,254,198,254,252
100 DATA124,254,198,192,192,198,254,124
110 DATA248,252,206,198,198,206,252,248
120 DATA254,254,192,252,252,192,254,254
130 DATA254,254,192,252,252,192,192,192
140 DATA124,254,192,222,222,198,254,124
150 DATA198,198,198,254,254,198,198,198
160 DATA254,254,24,24,24,24,254,254
170 DATA254,254,24,24,24,216,248,112
180 DATA198,204,216,240,240,216,204,198
190 DATA192,192,192,192,192,192,254,254
200 DATA198,238,254,214,198,198,198,198
210 DATA198,230,246,254,254,222,206,198
220 DATA124,254,198,198,198,198,254,124
230 DATA252,254,198,254,252,192,192,192
240 DATA124,254,198,214,222,206,254,124
250 DATA252,254,198,254,252,216,204,198
260 DATA124,254,192,252,126,6,254,124
270 DATA254,254,24,24,24,24,24,24
280 DATA198,198,198,198,198,198,254,124
290 DATA198,198,198,198,198,108,56,16
300 DATA198,198,198,214,214,214,254,108
310 DATA130,198,108,56,56,108,198,130
320 DATA102,102,102,126,60,24,24,24
330 DATA254,254,14,28,56,112,254,254
340 DATA56,56,56,0,0,56,56,56
350 DATA0,0,0,24,60,60,24
360 DATA129,66,24,36,36,24,66,129
370 DATA0,0,24,126,255,255,255
380 DATA219,153,0,219,219,0,153,219
390 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
400 DATA0,31,35,69,249,138,140,248
410 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
420 DATA28,28,8,28,42,8,20,34
430 DATA98,84,199,20,117,74,102,44
440 DATA0,1,3,43,85,234,255,127
450 DATA126,36,36,194,199,255,255,254
460 DATA153,153,153,153,153,153,153,153
470 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
480 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
490 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
500 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
510 DATA0,0,0,0,12,12,24,48
520 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
530 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
540 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
550 DATA0,124,198,198,198,198,124,0
560 DATA0,24,56,120,24,24,254,0
570 DATA0,124,134,6,124,192,254,0
580 DATA0,124,134,60,6,134,124,0
590 DATA0,192,216,216,254,24,24,0
600 DATA0,254,192,252,6,134,124,0
610 DATA0,124,192,252,198,198,124,0
620 DATA0,254,6,12,24,48,48,0
630 DATA0,124,198,124,198,198,124,0
640 DATA0,124,198,198,126,6,124,0
650 POKE5298,PEEK(65298)AND251:POKE5299,56
660 SCNLRL

```



**WHEN SUPERPOWERS COLLIDE**

# The fate of mankind is in your hands



## Germany 1985

NATO forces must repel the Soviet invasion of West Germany.

## RDF 1985

The US Rapid Forces must repel the Soviet invasion of West Germany.

## 1985

West Germans must repel the Soviet invasion of West Germany.

Where will be the frontline encounter in this titanic struggle between the opposing forces of East and West in the battle for supremacy in the destiny of the human race. An intense study in the form of playing that will continue fine and military this our 20th century. Expert, make the decisions that might change the destiny of future generations, appearance of the 21st century.

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## F 1985



## Baltic 1985



**This could be the end of civilisation as we know it!**



STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS, INC.



Transatlantic Simulations, Unit 10, The Parkway Industrial Estate, Hendage Street, Birmingham

# Multimodem<sup>64</sup>

Miracle's 64 Multimodem has been a long time getting BART approval, a great pity since it's one of the most advanced 64 specific modems around. Now that you can use it without breaking the law, we thought it was time for a detailed look at its many features.

For those unfamiliar with the name Miracle Technology are the people behind the WS2000 and WS3000 range of professional modems. Many of the features previously only found on such "professional" modems appear in the Multimodem's specification, including auto-dial and auto answer, selectable baud rates, and mailbox facilities. Before I get carried away, let's take a look at exactly what you get for your money.

The 64 Multimodem costs £115.15 including VAT and delivery. For that you get the modem itself, a ten pound voucher towards the cost of a Micronet subscription, a directory of U.K. bulletin boards.

Probably the biggest advantage of this over any other come package is that all the software you are likely to need is included on ROM, thus obviating the need to load extra programs from disk as and when you need them. With the Multimodem plugged in you're set up for just about anything. The only database you can't access is Computar. Incidentally, the software was written by V2 Computing, authors of much of the 64 games software to be found on Computar and Micronet.

## Options

Switch on your 64 with the

databases and Bulletin Boards (BB's) loaded with a Basic program supplied to the manual.

**Load Additional Features:** For future facilities which will be provided on disk.

**Execute Additional Features:** As above.

**Dish Mode:** For a directory and DOS commands.

**Viewdata Mode:** To access Micronet and other Viewdata based BBs like The Gazette or Home and Motel.

**Serial Devices:** Configures the modem for your particular printer and disk drive/cassette set up.

**Terminal mode:** For calling up other BBs such as those which operate on 300/300 or 1200/75 baud scaling format. Rather than go into detail about each of these options — which would take some time — I'll concentrate on those which you're most likely to want to make use of. This doesn't mean the others are unimportant — they're there if you need them.

The first thing I did with the Multimodem was to call up Micronet 800. Pressing F5 takes you into Viewdata mode and it's then simply a matter of pressing F1, leaving in the number of the nearest Personal computer and logging on in the usual fashion.

There are a number of other facilities on the viewdata menu you can make use of whilst online. Using the F4 and F5 keys in combination allows you to call up a disk directory and examine previously saved pages or mailboxes. Mailboxes can be created online for later transmission — no point in spending hours creating vocal masterpieces while running up your phone bill. The Multimodem also permits full use of ESC codes to generate fancy graphics like double-height flashing letters in any of the 64's 15 colours.

## Micronet and more

One of the most useful applications of the office mailbox preparation facility (apart from preparing mailboxes) is that you can use it to log on to Micronet, download frames, or your mailboxes, and then log off. This is done by placing all the relevant page numbers and central codes in a mailbox and sending it as soon as you are logged on, saving considerable cou-

next time and money.

A number of useful facilities can be called up while you are online. Most important is probably the download function which allows you to load 64 software from Micronet 800. A hard copy of the current screen can be produced if you have a printer, although this takes a while as it's probably a good idea to save to disk and print it out once you've logged off. A disk directory can be viewed whilst online which is extremely useful if you've forgotten the name of the mailbox you want to access.

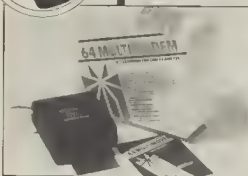
Should you tire of Micronet 800, or simply want to look at something all the better track you can make use of terminal mode. This allows you to connect bulletin boards operating on 1200/75 and 300/300 baud. Having selected one of these you must configure your system for the correct parity, local echo and line feeds. Most amateur BBs operate no parity and supply line feeds, but it's often very much a matter of trial and error.

For a different type of the Multimodem also has auto answer which means you can set up your own BB. This has to be the most exciting development yet in 64 comms. Initially the software was quite basic. All it did was answer the phone, send a message to the caller and send their message to your printer — a kind of digital answering machine. V2 have now produced a revised version of the ROM which enables you to set up your own mini database. If you already have an early version of the modem, send it back to Miracle Technology and they will upgrade it free of charge.

Anyone considering making the move into comms couldn't have picked a better time. At the price, the 64 Multimodem offers more than any previously available Commodore modem. Now that it has received BART approval it will undoubtedly rank high, if not top at any self-respecting Commodore user's shopping list.

Ken McMehe

- 64 Multimodem
- Miracle Technology
- 0473 216141
- Price: £115.15



Multimodem in place and you will be presented with the main menu screen. All functions are accessed by calling up sub-menus from the main screen. To briefly run through them the options are:

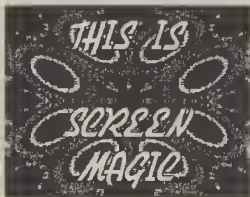
**Disk Directory:** loads from disk a directory of your most frequently used



## Print Shop reviewed

月

# print



Mix text and Kaleidoscope effects in the Screen Magic section.

Only one graphic can appear but you have a choice of three sizes and various layouts. So you could have a pattern of repeated graphics or just one large one slap bang in the middle.

Text can be written and arranged in three sizes with options for solid characters, outline or 3-D. Sizes and style can be mixed on the same card or sign, but the amount of text available depends on the font you choose — some are bigger than others.

Sadly, you can't actually see the finished design before printing it out, so perfectists will end up rewording and printing it again.

The Letterhead option works in the same way except that type sizes are fixed. You get a large first line with three lines of smaller text underneath for the address. The graphic (fixed size) can appear on the left, the right or repeat straight across the top.

Creating Banners is the most fun of all. Again, all the fonts and graphics are available but only in one size — extra large. Simply choose your graphic, its position and type out your text. Sections can be 'chained' together to let you mix different fonts and graphics. But don't go for a 30 foot banner if you're in a hurry.

Finally, there's the Graphics Editor section which lets you draw and save to disk your own designs for use instead of the ready-made graphics. You can also call up and modify the ready-made — put a few more

Personal stationery is a cinch with Print Shop, and you can include any of the graphics supplied on disk.

candles on the custom birthday cake perhaps? Sadly, this section is a little rudimentary, offering none of the usual facilities like box, circle, block move and copy. But it does let you use Koala Pad instead of keyboard or joystick input.

## Is it for you?

Print Shop is incredibly good fun but, being an American import, it doesn't come cheap at £44.95. You'll need to use it a lot to justify the money. So it looks like being more suitable to clubs, associations and societies rather than the home.

Trouble is, the graphics are intended for home use and you might



not like the fluff and twee style of presentation you tend to get. So you'll need to make good use of the graphics editor if you're thinking of using it professionally.

Lately, printing is very slow even with fairly quick printers. The head doesn't skip over blank space, nor does it print bi-directionally. Added to that, the computer has to stop and 'think' occasionally which also temporarily hangs up the printer.

The results are worth waiting for but don't try making multiple copies, even though there's a facility provided. Take photostats of your original. And if you're printing a long banner, don't even contemplate it if you're in a hurry. A really large one could take a good half hour.

## Conclusions

Print Shop should have arrived in the UK ages ago. It's a genuinely unique program that's great fun, practical and very easy to use. Why can't all utilities be like this?

It's only snag is the price; it's a

Score away burglars with a custom sign?

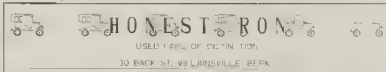
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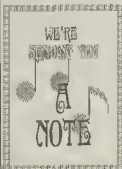
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luxury that only the better off families will be able to afford. But if you've already got all the hardware it needs and a genuine use for it, looking out the window may not hurt too much.

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# NEXT

# Fun!

**S**lap some suntan oil on, pull the ring off a can of coke, and collapse into the nearest deckchair for a sizzling mid-Summer read. Our red-hot August issue is packed full of goodies.

## Play to Win

Our readers have been busy playing *Ghosts and Goblins*, *Buggles*, *Tau Ceti* as well as all the latest C16/Plus4 games. Don't miss these top tips next month, and every month.

## Screen Scene

Next month's bugle is likely to be infiltrator from U.S. Gold. We'll have a full review plus *Time Trail*, *Way of the Tiger*, *Knight Games*, *Samantha Fox's Strip Poker*, *Winter Games* for the C16, *Plus4 Mercenary* and many more in this mid summer bumper Screen Scene. Don't you dare miss this one.

## C.E.S. Show Report

The big American games houses have been showing off their wares in Chicago this month. One of our former C16 games has even been released by a software house. Dan Götman journeyed west to the windy city to check them out.

## Business

If you use Superbase you will find out our Get More From feature on the database available. Plus reviews of Timeworks 128 packages — America's best selling business packages.

## Type-ins

If you haven't got the cash then type in a listing. Our type-ins are getting better all the time. One of our former C16 games has even been released by a software house as a full price job — *Baby Sacks*.

## Tried and Tested

We take a long hard look at *Newsroom* — the latest print utility from Ariolasoft that will enable you to publish your own magazine. We also check out *Script Plus* — a high quality, cartridge-based word processor for the C16 and Plus4.

## Plus

There are also competitions, all the latest news in Buzz including the full story on the new 64, *Into the Valley*, *Tommy's Tips*, *Loony Uncle Jim*, and all the fifth that 'they' don't want you to know about in *Hot Shots*. It's one hell of an issue, it's on sale on June 26th, it's a pure away at a quid, and if you don't want to miss it ask your newsagent to keep one back for you now. Another way of making sure of your CU is to take out a subscription. The time is right to do this as we have a special offer on back issues to all new subscribers. See page 69 for details.

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# MONTH

# OFF THE HOOK



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# Uncle Jim's Commodore Club

My nephew Trevor gave me a copy of *Tolstoy's War and Peace* adventure the other day. He's stuck at the point where Prince Dimitri gets confronted by a group of cossecks outside a fishmongers. I told him I'd read it and would be able to work it out in no time, but that wasn't quite true. I'd only watched an episode of the television series made a few years back.

Anyway after two days on it I was going mad, my head was full of Bulgars, wheatfields and women called Anne. The final straw was a nightmare I had after a late session the other night.

I dreamt that I was in a Hotel room in St Petersburg, room number 473 and I was carrying a cheeseburger, a stuffed walrus and a trouser press. There was a really useful-looking pistol on the floor, but I couldn't pick it up unless I put one of the other things down. I was wondering which to get rid of, when a wizened little dwarf sidled up to me.

"Peet!"

"Who are you?" I asked.

"I am the Count Krepp of Xxendor," he replied, "and you are Uncle Jim of Commodore User and I claim my five pounds."

"Five pounds!" I exclaimed. "You must be joking!"

"Right," he said, kicking my ankle. "Just for that, you forfeit three objects of my choosing," and with a cackle he made his exit.

So there I was in room 473 with a stuffed walrus, wondering what the hell to do when the walrus started speaking!

"Hello," it said. "My name is Walter Petrovich, and you'd better give me a herring or I'll do something really nasty to you."

I dropped the walrus and fled down the hall only to find that I had no clothes on. Just as I was about to run back into room 473 I was arrested by two guardsmen in drag. The next thing I knew I was in jail charged with assaulting a walrus and having an offensive body.

After a while I was able to make something of the gloomy surroundings. On

Uncle Jim's taken time off from DIY computer maintenance to do some adventure playing. All has not gone to plan, though.

the damp walls opposite was a key on a hook. I ran over to it, but naturally I couldn't reach it. I sat down again to puzzle it out when I heard a shout.

"Get off me you clumsy twit!" "Who are you?" I asked startled voice. "I'm Prince Dimitri," he replied. "Can't you remember any of the characters in this dream? I was captured outside a fishmongers in Moscow by a group of Cossecks for selling sprats out of season."

Anyway between the two of us we were able to climb up and get the key on the wall. It opened the door. We were just running down a passage when a large cannon ball made a hole in my stomach.

"Aeerrgh!" I shouted, and abruptly woke up in a state of total panic. I'd jumped out of bed, washed and dressed, hopped on my bike and was half way down the road before I noticed that it was still dark. Glancing at the radioactive luminous dial of my watch, I saw that it was only two in the morning, so I sneaked quietly home again, hoping to avoid embarrassment, only to find I'd locked myself out!

In my frustration I pushed the customised 64 doorbell, only to have it play me back the 1916 Overture. I gave up and made an early start for work. That'll teach me to stick to Horlicks and a Book at Bedtime!

However, one good thing came out of the whole gruesome experience, I had a great idea whilst I was standing outside the office waiting for it to open.

Perhaps the ultimate in deception, I thought as the sun rose over the building, would be the VIC 20 upgrade, in which you put all the guts from your Commodore 64 into a VIC 20 casing. I'm sure this modification would be popular among VIC users, and there must be quite a lot of money to be made by doing it.

The only snag is that to reduce costs you would need to sell a corresponding number of 64 downgrades, using the VIC components. Still, with a bit of imaginative advertising that shouldn't be a problem.

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bit short of time or, indeed, expertise.

A useful dodge is to buy proper peripherals from a shop and disguise them as home-made ones. I fooled Ronnie the postman completely with my Squeazy bottle joystick, which consisted of a sawn-off detergent bottle placed over the handle of a Quickshot II. Other fake O.I.Y. add-ons include the Shoe Box Disk Drive, the Bar of Soap Mouse (be sure to use non-scented soap).

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# TOMMY'S TIPS

When it comes to answering your technical and programming queries, whether they're on the 64, 128, 16 or Plus/4, Tommy's your man. Go on, write to him: Tommy's Tips, Commodore User, 30-32 Farrington Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

## Screen Store

● I am at the moment trying to write an adventure game for my 64. I would like to know if a hi-res picture is stored as data or if it is just dumped into memory. Many games have a lot of hi-res screens and since each takes up 8K how do they do this with only 38K basic or 54K machine code.

**Andrew Paddon, Hants.**

It is unlikely that they will be stored as DATA statements, since most hi-res screens in Adventure games are drawn using machine-code. Basic would take too long to draw an entire screen.

While it is perfectly possible to store several hi-res screens elsewhere in memory until needed, this is a very extravagant way of doing it, as you point out. What is often done is to either draw the screen directly onto the display (e.g. The Hobbit), or to draw only one or two screens in advance in another part of memory ready to be displayed when requested. Don't forget that some 'hi-res' screens are in fact very clever combinations of UDGs and Sprites which take up a lot less space in memory.

## Down Under

● I've got two problems for you concerning my Commodore 64. Firstly, is there a POKE or a program which will let me work on two programs at the same time? For example, could I store one program in memory

whilst working on the other, and then get the first one back later?

Secondly, I sometimes see POKE 808,251 in a program to stop it from listing. My question is, can you break into such a program with a PEEK or POKE?

**A. Pott, Melbourne, Australia.**

There is indeed a way of storing two programs in memory at the same time. What you do is to write your program in the normal way using the normal start of Basic. Provided the first program does not occupy more than 12 kbytes of RAM, you can move the start of Basic beyond the end of your first program simply by typing the following direct command: **POKE 44, 56: POKE 14336, 0: NEW**

You can now start writing the second program without affecting the first one in any way. To return to the first program again type **POKE 44, 8** (to go back to the second program, type **POKE 44, 56**). Once you have the two programs in memory you can only safely edit the second one, but they can both be saved quite separately, provided neither one has been run.

Programs can be loaded into the separate areas as well just as if each had the machine to itself. You have in effect split the memory in two giving half to each program and by altering the top of Basic (addresses 55 & 56) as well (e.g. just below the start of the second program when running the first) you could actually have two totally independent programs and be able to run either.

If you leave the top of Basic where it is, then both programs will share the data/variables area which may be of use, but is more dangerous unless you want common data (in which case do not use RUN to start either program, use GOTO 10 instead). You can even have a small machine-code program in the C000 area which allows you to switch between the two programs using the function keys. The following program

will do just that: (load and run it before writing/loading your required Basic program)

```
10 PRINT "[CLR] M/C
   LOADER";
20 FOR A=49152 TO 49180
30 READ V: POKEA, V
40 T=T+V
50 NEXTA: IF T<>3620 THEN
   PRINT "CHECKSUM
   ERROR": STOP
55 POKE 14336, 0
60 POKE 56334, 0: POKE
   788, 0: POKE 789, 192:
   POKE 56334, 1
70 PRINT "COMPLETED":
   PRINT
80 PRINT "F1 GIVES AREA
   2048 - 14334"
90 PRINT "F3 GIVES AREA
   14336 - 40959": ENO
100 GATA 234, 169, 4, 197,
   197, 240, 9, 169, 5, 197,
   197
110 DATA 240, 6, 76, 25, 192,
   169, 8, 76, 23, 192
120 DATA 169, 56, 133, 44,
   234, 76, 49, 234
```

Pressing F1 selects the lower area, F3 selects the higher area. If you have a disk drive it will also allow you to switch areas and load a directory without destroying the program in memory.

With regard to your second query, if the program can be halted then just type **POKE 808,237** to restore the listing facility. If the program also overruns then you will have to find a way to stop it first since you can't 'break-in' to a program that is running by using a POKE command

## Renumber

● I have been writing a program on my 64 but have come across a problem. If I want to add something earlier in the program, I find that the sequence numbers are too close together e.g. 11, 12, 14, and I cannot fit my addition into the program. I overcome this problem by using GOSUB, RETURN's but on a listing the program is very messy and so it is for school I was wondering whether there was a command or program for re-sequence numbering a program (like there is on a BBC-B).

**Barry Kendall, Lincs.**

There is no simple command unfortunately, it has to be done by a program. It sounds very much as though you didn't design the program correctly before you started writing it. Also, a well structured

program can happily use GOSUBs to call specific routines without in any way looking messy, indeed, many programmers think that you should try to write your programs like that deliberately in the so-called "modular" fashion.

Your best bet would be to buy one of the BASIC extensions such as *BASIC-Base* or *Softdisk*, etc., which allow you to use AUTO numbering, RENUMBER, DELETE and all the other program development commands that Commodore forgot! It will certainly be worthwhile if this is a common problem as you are intending to write a number of programs.

## Ghost Buster

● I own a C16 and would like you to show me how to make these DATA statements draw a ghost using the Read statement. The DATA statements are as follows:

```
DATA 0, 64, 0, 0, 240, 0, 1, 76
DATA 0, 3, 19, 0, 51, 31, 128, 123
DATA 31, 128, 127, 191, 0, 63, 254, 0
DATA 15, 248, 0, 3, 248, 0, 1, 252
DATA 254, 0, 1, 254, 0, 3, 254, 0
DATA 3, 254, 0, 3, 254, 0, 3, 254
DATA 0, 7, 255, 0, 15, 255, 128
```

Guy Black, W. Yorks.

You've got confused somewhere, the DATA statements you give are for a SPRITE on either the 64 or 128. Since the C16 doesn't have any sprites (a sad oversight on Commodore's part!) you cannot use the values exactly as they stand since they will be meaningless to your computer.

The following program will give you the character you want, bearing in mind that a sprite is 24 by 21 pixels while a single UDG is only 8 by 8. The DATA statements must therefore be taken in the order 1st, 4th, 7th etc up to 22nd, then 2nd, 5th, 8th etc. The figure is therefore made up of 9 UDGs, but can be moved as a whole using a string variable; in this case called GHOSTS.

```
100 POKE 52, 56: POKE 56, 56: REM PROTECT UDG AREA
110 PRINT "(CLR)": POKE 65298, (PEEK(65298) AND 251) OR 8
115 POKE 65299, (PEEK(65299) AND 3) OR 6
```

```
120 POKE CH=14336 IO 14407
130 READ GH: POKE CH, GH
140 NEXT CH
145 CHAR, 15, 10, ""
150 GHOSTS = "" @ ABC
(DOWN) (LEFT) (LEFT)
(LEFT) CODE (DOWN)
(LEFT) (LEFT) (LEFT) FGH""
160 PRINT GHOSTS
170 GETAS: IF A<>" " THEN 170
180 GOTO 1060
200 DATA 0, 0, 1, 3, 51, 123, 127, 63
210 DATA 64, 240, 176, 19, 31, 31, 191, 254
220 DATA 0, 0, 0, 128, 128, 0, 0
230 DATA 15, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 3
240 DATA 248, 248, 252, 252, 254, 254, 254, 254
250 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0
260 DATA 3, 3, 3, 7, 15, 0, 0, 0
270 DATA 254, 254, 254, 255, 255, 0, 0, 0
280 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 128, 0, 0, 0
1000 POKE 65298, 196: POKE 65299, 208
1010 END
```

Note that this changes the first nine characters to the UDGs then displays the string.

Lines 170-175 alter the pointer to the character set using registers in the TED chip. Lines 176-180 copy the DATA into the character area. Once you have run the program and seen the "ghost", press the space bar to return to the normal text screen and you can see how the string is displayed.

## Cursor Cruncher

● I notice that you often give POKES to enable or disable certain functions. I am trying to write an invoicing program and I think it would be a good idea to disable the cursor keys, RUN/STOP KEY, etc. Would it be worth my while buying the "Programmers' Reference Guide"? Does it contain all the clever pokes that you mention? Paul Bird, Suffolk.

You can disable only those keys or commands which have some function in Basic as opposed to returning an ASCII value. Thus you can disable the RUN/STOP key but not the cursor keys. To cover both areas you

need a short input routine which checks the keys as well as disabling the functions.

The Programmers' Reference Guide only gives you the necessary addresses, not the POKES that are associated with them. The following program will disable RUN/STOP and RESTORE and then shows an input routine that allows only alphanumeric characters plus DELETE and RETURN; all other characters are ignored. You can amend this to ignore any other specific characters if you need it.

```
10 PRINT CHR$(8): REM Disable SHIFT/C=
20 POKE 808, 225: REM Disable RUN/STOP and RESTORE
1000 TS=""
1005 PRINT "[YEL] L [LEFT] [WHIT]"
1010 GETAS: IF A$="" THEN 1010
1020 IF A$=CHR$(13) THEN 1070
1030 IF A$=CHR$(20) THEN TS=LEFT$(TS,LEN(TS)-1): GOTO 1060
1040 IF ASC(A$)<48 OR ASC(A$)>90 THEN 1005
1050 TS=TS+A$
1060 PRINTAS: GOTO 1005
1070 PRINT"": RETURN
```

To use the input routine, GOSUB 1000. On returning from the routine, TS will contain the complete string that has just been input. It will allow deletion of mistakes, although don't attempt to delete more characters than you have typed.

## Big Screen

● Could you explain to me, how to have more than one screen resident in memory, and then move from one to the other?

What I mean is, think of a map larger than the screen (4 screens up - 4 screens down - 4 screens left and right). How do I hold the information, so that I can scroll in all directions, using a joystick?

S. Reeves, Birmingham.

What you appear to be asking for is the ability to store a total of 81 screens in a 9x9 square which you can access as one BIG screen area. If I tell you that it will require about 5 Mbytes of RAM to store that sort of area you will see that this is not a very practical way of doing it. The way to be able to scroll in all directions is to have machine code

which draws the next line (vertical or horizontal) on the edge of the screen in the direction you wish to move. By reducing the screen size to 38 cols by 24 rows, this new line is created in the "hidden area" of the screen. When you scroll the screen the new data will appear.

It is rather difficult to be able to scroll in all 4 directions since you will have to do 2 sets of drawing when moving into a corner for example and write 4 different mic routines to do the drawing and scrolling. Not only must you draw the line, but first work out what it is you are going to display to match the invisible border. Because the whole screen is refreshed every 1/25th of a second this will be very jerky if done using Basic, but page 128 of the Programmers' Reference Manual will start you off if you want to experiment.

The scrolling registers are 53270 (X-direction) and 53265 (Y-direction). In both cases Bit 3 sets the screen size while Bits 0-2 set the scroll position. Note that sprites are not affected by scrolling the screen in this way so if required to move with the screen you must make separate provision for them.

## Clever Pokes

● I've written a little wordprocessing program for my 128. Although it's nowhere near as good as the professional packages, I'd like to add some nice little touches. I'd like to give an option for cursor flash on/off and whether the keys will repeat or not. Can you help? Rod Williams, Reading.

To control the cursor flash, you type POKE 2598, 64 to stop it flashing, and POKE 2598, 0 to start it again. By the way, this only works in 40-column mode as the address refers to the VIC chip and not the VDC chip as used for the 80-column display.

To control the key repeat function, you type POKE 2594, 64 to turn off key-repeat, POKE 2594, 0 makes only the spacebar and cursor keys repeat, and finally POKE 2594, 128 sets everything back to normal.

**TOMMY'S TIPS**



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# Hot shots

By  
Mike Patenden

What a month! Phew, all that World Cup action has left me drained. I can tell you Forty hours of televised football has just about worn out my TV. I must have missed out on about a week's sleep following the whole business, and we haven't reached the final yet.

● I certainly haven't lost any sleep over U.S. Gold's World Cup Carnival though, though they may have. There's been more fuss about that than England's third goal against West Germany in '86. The cause of it is that it isn't a particularly new game. In fact it's Arctic's football game, which appeared on *Now Games II*. A lot of retailers out there are pretty unhappy. A few even refused to take it when they found out. But of an own goal there I feel.

● If a while since I had anything new to tell you about my good friends at Demark. The horse of good taste have landed themselves in the soup with the creators of *Spitting Images*. You may have noticed a game called *Spitting Images* on the Spectrum recently in the shops. Demark actually approached the writers before they put the game out to see if they wanted to do an official release. The answer was, unsurprisingly, no. So they thought 'what the hell, we'll put it out anyway'. And lo and behold in came the writ by return post! The title has now been changed to *Split Personalities*, but the game is just the same — a children's educational program that originally featured dinosaurs.

● Don't think that Demark have

cleaned up their act though, they can still get low. In fact this is possibly the lowest they've ever got, which is pretty low. They've been experimenting with some digitisers down there. What are they trying to digitise you ask, unapologetically? Would you believe me if I said blue movies? Shock! Wait till the San gets hold of that one — in fact I might even sell it to them. . . .

● It is for so-called such as this that a book called *Children at Risk* has appeared. It's one of those terribly concerned, terribly Christian publications that purports that today's kids are all going to grow up to be psychopaths. Careful with that axe Eugene.

● One thing the Sun have already got hold of is Probe's *Dirty Den* game. A bevy of hacks (if that's not the collective name it should be) stamped into the company's office demanding to know the truth behind the lies etc, and Fergus McGovern, Probe boss ex-linch country and western guitarist, (fact?), told them he'd never heard of any *Dirty Den* or a programme called *Estdenters*.

● Fergus is a bit of a one for the blarney, so I don't know whether to believe his little tale about an *Amiga* Commodore seal him. It seems they wired up the power supply wrong (it was an American model) so when they turned the machine on there was a small puff of smoke and a raised microl! Having heard the tales about Commodore I can well believe it.

● The software industry is notorious

for its inventiveness and enterprisingness. No one more so than CRL's go-ahead young boss Clement Chambers whose first business venture was a brainwave he had one day at the opticians. How the hell can people decide what glasses they want if they can't see themselves when they try a pair of frames on? He thought squinting at the receptionist. Why don't I get the opticians to install video cameras so people can see themselves. Such a short-lived brainwave had to founder and it did.

● You may remember the Sick Sick Spornix picture we printed in the mag last month. It transpires there's a game to follow. I received a plaintive note last week informing me of it and asking 'Who wants the exclusive?' The answer guys is so-one. Sorry. And it seems so-one wants the game either — even Demark turned it down.

● Now a public information announcement. Rumours flying around the industry of the moment suggest Beyond are struggling. Denton Designs have put the breaks on three games they were programming for the company including *Dante's Inferno* (sounds like a hot one). The

reason may have something to do with the disappearance of distribution company SID into that great Bermuda Software Triangle. What with them and the demise of Unisoft I advise you to be very careful about mail order firms in future.

● Just in case you number among my critics who maintain that my scandalmongering has no place in the mag and that I should be telling you all about the latest games and what programmers eat for breakfast (Andrew Braybrook has muses) here's some inside info on the hot games already under development for the Christmas period. It's going to be one hell of a light this year, with U.S. Gold working on *Granite*, Demark posing questions like crazy to get *Trivial Pursuit* ready in time, and Ocean plunging into their new arcade bopper *Terra Cresta*. Look out too for sequels to *Chastibusters* and *Hacker* from Activision. There, don't say I never tell you anything.

● And with that I must leave you. Keep your ears open there's always a punt going for a good story. Next month a special holiday flavoured Hotshot. Hasta la vista.



Why is this man pretending to be an overzealous roast chicken with all that bicolour wrapped around him? Well in fact it's our deputy editor Rohden Buelck fulfilling a lifetime's ambition to get into Hotshots shortly after completing the Paris Marathon. Rohden completed the gruelling twenty-six miles (there's actually a bit more than that because Queen Victoria wanted to sit in a certain place to see the first competitive marathon) in four hours, just short of the world record time of two hours eighteen minutes. He raised a cool £270 in the process for Save the Children, so well done BB, (pass me the Badoz Mike — dep. ed.)

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